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INTER-ARAB TRADE SEEN AS INADEQUATE

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 14 Jan 81 p 9

[Article by al-Husayn ibn al-Hajj Nasr: "Arab Economy in 10 Years; Deficit in Arab Trade Balance for Essential Food Commodities Amounted to 6.3 Billion Dollars; Trade Exchange Among Arab Countries Requires Fundamental Solution?]

[Text] If the Arabs are not as united politically as they should be, then are they united economically?

This ordinary question has been asked for dozens of years and in light of the present situation, it may be asked for dozens more years to come because practically, economic unity is a lot more difficult than political unity or grouping. It is very easy to declare a political unity, to transmit the ceremonies of concluding such a unity [agreement] on television screens and to highlight it in red bannerlines on the front pages of newspapers and magazines while the essence and application of such unity remain a secret in the conscience of the unknown. What is regrettable is that those who declared political unity as a first step on the path of economic unity and, consequently, on the path of merger unity have dispersed and are now in a worse state than when they were united. The examples are numerous from the farthest Arab Maghreb to the farthest Arab East. This doesn't mean that the will for unity is not present but that the [failure of unity] is due at times to causes beyond the control of the common Arab will.

It is no secret that every Arab country has its political and economic qualities and characteristics, its geographic situation and even its social situation. The West European countries were aware of these characteristics and studied them, first with the objective human intellect and then with the electronic computer. After deliberation, there came into existence the so-called EEC Group. The birth of this group has not been free of problems. Until the end of the 1960's, there was a war going on between the EEC Group, led by the Gaullist France, on the one hand and the United Kingdom on the other because de Gaulle objected to Britain's accession to this economic market and said at the time that the British economic structure did not have the same characteristics as those of the EEC member countries. Despite this disagreement, the Gaullist France did not send a squadron of its Mirages to sabotage the British economy and did not sever all political and economic relations with Britain and Britain did not send terrorists to destroy the [EEC] organization headquarters in Brussels. Rather, both sides went on working

patiently to surmount the difficulties and to create the right atmosphere to enable Britain to accede to the EEC--an accession which did take place afterwards without clamor and without upheavals threatening the market.

[Western] Europe is not the only part of the world that has embarked on such an economic step. There is the communist world which has also set up the Comecon organization and there are in all the continents economic organizations involving numerous groups of countries.

The Arabs have not despaired of creating a common Arab market that would benefit their economies and, consequently, their peoples. The common Arab market is still more of a plan [than of a reality] and the results are still at their beginning because of the failure to separate the political aspects from the economic problems and because it is impossible to strike all problems with a magic wand that would eliminate the problems and bring about a new era in which political and economic unity is realized. In every summit meeting, the Arabs have continued to devote enormous efforts to the economic aspect in order to realize a minimum degree of cooperation and integration and to eliminate the obstacles hampering economic exchange.

No Arab citizen in any Arab country is required to be an expert on economic affairs to realize that economic transactions between all the Arab countries have not exceeded the zero level by much.

In the best cases, the inter-Arab trade represents 5 percent of the exports and 3 percent of the imports. Were it not for sudden problems, these percentages could be improved, not to say brought up to the 100 percent level. In view of the Arabs' real awareness of the need to reform their economic dealings, the Amman summit resolutions have devoted attention to developing the economic aspects out of the belief that there can be no political prosperity without economic prosperity.

Those familiar with the economic affairs of our Arab world estimate that the economy of the Arab countries has shared the economic problems and aspirations of most economies of the developing countries by virtue of its belonging to the third world countries and by virtue of its efforts to liquidate backwardness and subservience. But among the third world countries, the efforts of the Arab countries are distinguished by additional tasks resulting from confronting the challenge of fragmentation and occupation imposed on our Arab homeland by colonialism. Bolstering the intrinsic Arab capabilities and uniting the Arab positions are certain to eliminate the traces of subservience to the foreigner and to liquidate the Zionist settlement colonialism. The continued presence of this colonialism in the heart of the Arab homeland poses a direct threat to the Arab existence. This is why full liberation of the occupied Arab territories tops the basic priorities and goals of the common Arab action.

Despite the development accomplishments generally realized by the Arab economy separately and collectively in comparison to what the other non-Arab developing countries have realized, these accomplishments have been accompanied by a number of risks, of which the most significant are:

The risk of increasingly isolated regional development.

Exposure of the oil wealth to depletion.

The dangers of the continued impact of the international economy's developments.

The increased dangers of the misdistribution of the Arab work force and the increased dangers of the currently existing industrialization pattern.

The Arab Economic Unity Council believes that the Arab countries realized modest growth rates in the social [presumably meaning gross] local production at current prices during the 1970's and that the inflationary pressures in the second part of the 1970's led to lowering these rates.

However, the Arab Monetary Fund reports indicate that the real growth rates dropped in 1977-78 compared to the 1973-76 period due to the freeze in oil prices, the drop in oil production, the rising import rates and the declining trade exchange conditions.

The Arab oil countries realized an ordinary growth rate of 7.5 percent annually in the first half of the 1970's which dropped to 2.2 percent annually in the second half of the decade whereas the Arab non-oil countries realized a growth rate of 5 percent in the first half of the 1970's which dropped to about 2 percent in the second half of the same period.

Spending Structure

The 1970's have been characterized by increased consumer spending rates on the basis of the current prices, considering that the proportion of consumer spending in the Arab non-oil countries amounted to nearly 90 percent of the gross national production whereas this spending in the Arab oil countries dropped from 56 percent of the gross national production in the early 1970's to 42 percent of the production in the second half of the 1970's. But the proportion of consumer spending to the gross local production rose in the Arab oil countries in 1977-78 due to a drop in the Arab oil revenues in that period. As indicated by the initial reports, it is expected that the proportion of the consumer spending to the gross local production will drop under the current conditions due to the increase in the Arab states' oil production and to the rise in oil prices.

Price Tendencies

The rise in international prices in the 1970's, especially in 1974-75, resulting from external and internal factors has caused further deterioration in the distribution of revenues among the production sectors and has escalated the burdens of the groups with limited and low incomes on the one hand and created an imbalance in the general budgets on the other hand.

The rapid expansion in local spending in the second half of the 1970's which was not matched by similar expansion in production has led to increased price levels and to an imbalance in the structure and distribution of the national income. The

available estimates indicate that the annual rise in the prices of consumer commodities in the Arab countries as a whole was less than 55 percent [presumably meaning five percent] in the early 1970's and that this rise amounted to nearly 11 percent throughout the decade. As a result of this serious rise in the inflation rates, some Arab non-oil countries have resorted to borrowing whereas the Arab oil countries have reexamined their development programs to determine the possibilities of implementing their projects. These countries have also re-examined the exaggerated cost estimates of their projects and have adopted the policy of subsidizing the prices of consumer and essential goods.

Phenomenon of Inflation

Even though dealing with the phenomenon of inflation depends on the policies and measures adopted by each Arab country separately, the intricate causes and effects of this phenomenon at the Arab level require that the phenomenon be also dealt with through common Arab action. In addition to being a cause for the unbalanced distribution of the national income and for the numerous subsequent social and economic drawbacks, this phenomenon also destabilizes the Arab economic relations. Therefore, it is necessary to have a unified Arab economic policy aimed at curbing and dealing with internal inflation and at exerting efforts to deal with the "imported" inflation which seeks to absorb the increase in oil prices, to diminish the value of oil purchases paid in dollars and to reduce the value of the accumulated reserves. To attain this common Arab economic policy, the General Secretariat of the Arab Economic Unity Council is preparing a detailed study on the phenomenon of inflation with the aim of reaching a coordinated Arab position.

Exports and Imports

In the 1970's, the Arab economy was exposed to a number of external and internal economic developments that have affected directly the indicator of the commodity and service exports and imports in the gross local production. The general effect was an increase in the relative importance of the Arab exports and imports in the second half of the 1970's. The commodity and service exports of the Arab countries had formed 34 percent of the gross local income and these exports rose to 50 percent in the early 1970's.

The Arab countries' oil exports rose from 48 percent in the early 1970's to nearly 61 percent in the second half of the 1970's.

The Arab Monetary Fund estimates indicate that the value of the total Arab commodity exports in 1979 amounted to nearly 147.5 billion dollars compared to nearly 97 billion dollars in 1978 and 98 billion dollars in 1977.

The 1979 exports of the Arab non-oil states have been estimated at 10.5 billion dollars.

The Arab commodity imports have been estimated at 61 billion dollars in 1977, 75 billion dollars in 1978 and 90 billion dollars in 1979. The imports of the Arab oil countries have been estimated at 42 billion dollars in 1977 and at 67 billion dollars in 1979 whereas the imports of the Arab non-oil countries amounted to 20 billion dollars in 1977 and 23 billion dollars in 1979.

Oil Wealth

The Arab crude oil production amounted to 20.41 million barrels [sic] daily, dropping to 19.75 million barrels daily in 1978. The 1979 production amounted to 22.14 million barrels daily.

The increased Arab oil production in 1979 has had the biggest impact in raising the Arab share of the world production outside the socialist bloc. The Arab production rose to 44.08 percent [of the world production] in 1979 whereas it had represented 40.9 percent in 1978.

To insure conservation of the Arab crude reserve and to stabilize the purchasing power of the oil products, the Arab states have turned to the policy of curtailed production and modified export prices.

Arab crude is exported in particular to the western industrial nations, considering that the imports of the EEC member countries, of the United States and of Japan in the 1973-77 period represented 71 percent of the Arab crude oil exports. In the 1973-77 period, the Arab exports underwent a number of developments, embodied in reduced exports to the EEC member countries and in increased exports to the United States and Japan.

Role of Oil in Economy

The Arab oil exports play a significant role in the Arab economy and contribute 50-90 percent of the gross national production of the Arab homeland. Moreover, oil's contribution to the foreign trade rose from 89 [percent] in 1972 to 95 percent in 1977.

Though the role of oil in the national production structure is a major role, the percentage of the oil exports to the total exports varies from one country to another. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE and Libya, oil exports represented 98 percent of the total exports in the 1973-77 period. As for the Arab countries characterized by the diversity of their national production structure, such as Iraq and Algeria, the oil exports represented 88-96 percent of their total exports in the 1973-77 period.

Industrial Growth

If we examine the Arab industrial sector, we find that the broad Arab interest in industrial development has not led, despite the considerable growth realized by this sector in recent years, to a change in the structure and composition of the industrial sector. It is evident that the mining [al-istikhrayyah] industries' contribution to the gross local production exceeded 50 percent in the 1975-80 period. Moreover, the industrial sector's share of the investments allocated for the development plans has not exceeded 25 percent of these investments.

Furthermore, the conversion industries have been concentrated in a limited number of the Arab countries.

By examining the actual situation of the conversion industry in the Arab homeland in comparison to the goals stated by the five-year plans and by the sectoral studies, it can be said that the Arab industrial sector will grow at an annual rate of 10 percent and that the conversion industry's contribution to the gross local production will rise to 16 percent.

Food...Food

In the 1974-78 period, the Arab homeland's balance of trade was characterized by an obvious deficit [sic] in most of the basic food commodities. The average deficit in the Arab food balance of trade has amounted to 5.5 billion dollars and the deficit in the balance of trade for the basic food commodities has averaged 6.3 billion dollars whereas the value of the surplus commodities has amounted to 750,000 dollars [sic]. Grains have represented 44.2 percent of the total deficit, sugar 19.1 percent, milk, dairy products and their derivatives 11.3 percent, tea, coffee and cocoa 8.8 percent and meats 8 percent of this deficit. Meanwhile, citrus fruits have contributed nearly 40 percent of the total surplus and oil seeds 10 percent of this surplus.

It is obvious from these percentages and statistics that the Arab world's food needs are definite and this is why there has been stress on this particular point in more than an Arab conference and meeting.

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ARAB ILLITERACY ERADICATION EFFORTS DISCUSSED

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 8 Jan 81 p 5

[Article by 'Abd-al-Majid al-Ghamidi: "Seventy Three Percent of Arabs Are Illiterate; Arab 15-Year Plan to Eradicate Illiteracy; 1,827 Schools in Kingdom Set Aside to Eradicate Illiteracy and to Teach Grownups; Dr al-Sallum: These Are Problems of Adult Education and Solution Is...; Problem of Illiteracy Must Occupy Important Place in Thinking of Those in Charge of Drawing up Local Economic Development Programs"]

[Text] An educational seat for every student and there is no place for an ignorant person in this age whose cultural upsurge has begun to spread into and include villages and rural areas, in addition to the city.

This is why the Arab interest in eradicating illiteracy has arisen and why the state's interest in this aspect has surpassed similar interest in any developing country.

Programmed and regular education for those who missed education in childhood is now available for whoever seeks it. Such an individual can join any school to improve his educational, job and social standard.

Despite the short years during which the resources for child and adult education for both males and females in the city and the villages have been available to it, the state has been able to make a long stride in fighting and eradicating illiteracy. Here are adults sitting in the evening on the school seats of children and here they are holding their textbooks in their hands. These books are their weapon against ignorance and against backwardness.

With a quick glance at the total number of schools opened to educate adults--altogether 1,827 schools controlled by the Ministry of Education, not to mention similar schools for females--and at the total sum spent on this program, it becomes evident how interested is the state in this service and in preserving and continuing these efforts.

Perhaps the Arab interest in adult education and the designation of an annual adult education day to underline and celebrate adult education is due to the fact that the rate of illiteracy among the Arab people exceeds 70 percent. But this percentage is now decreasing.

On occasion of the Arab day to eradicate or, to be more precise, to control illiteracy, AL-RİYAD is happy to interview a number of those who have left their imprint in this field and have exerted successful efforts to fight this disease and to minimize its dangers. These interviews were conducted after members of the Central Province Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication Subcommittee attended the subcommittee's first session which was held last Wednesday at the Education Department in Riyadh Province under the chairmanship of Dr Hamad Ibrahim al-Sallum, the general director of education in Riyadh District, and the membership of Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Harqan, the general director of female education in Riyadh District; Sulayman al-Zuhayri, the director of the National Guard Education and Culture Department; Salih al-Sughayyar, representative of the Ministry of Defense; Dr Ibrahim Ghassab Judu' al-Ruwayli, the representative of the Ministry of Interior; 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Ahmadi, the representative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs; and Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sulaymi, the head of the Adult Education Section in Riyadh District. The committee discussed its agenda which included:

Followup on what has been done regarding the recommendations made by the previous meetings of the Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication Subcommittee.

A review of the efforts made to implement the 1400-1401 of the Hegira plan for adult education and illiteracy eradication by every side represented in the subcommittee.

Make preparations to participate in the Arab illiteracy eradication day.

Start of Interview

Our interview with Dr Hamad Ibrahim al-Sallum, the general director of education in the Central District and the chairman of the Central District's Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication Subcommittee, began with illiteracy in the Arab homeland and the role of the Arab Education, Culture and Sciences Organization in eradicating illiteracy in the Arab homeland, with the dimensions of the Ministry of Education's efforts in the sphere of adult education and with the problems of adult education and illiteracy eradication in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I said to Dr Hamad Ibrahim al-Sallum, the general director of education in the Central District: What is your opinion of the illiteracy eradication movement in the Arab homeland?

His excellency said: The illiteracy eradication movement in the Arab homeland has not yet assumed a place compatible with the nature of the problem of illiteracy and with its negative impact as a cultural, social and developmental problem. The illiteracy eradication efforts in the Arab world suffer from the lack of specialized, well-trained and vigilant cadres capable of working in, leading and spurring the illiteracy eradication organizations.

In nearly all the Arab countries, there are no specialized educational or informational efforts to raise the cultural and educational level of adults whose illiteracy has just been eradicated. These adults often revert to illiteracy

because they do not use what they have learned daily. Moreover, we notice that most illiteracy eradication books are either below or above the adult education level and that these books fail to take into consideration the adults' psychological and educational characteristics, the characteristics of the various environments and the requirements of the age.

The illiteracy eradication methods in the Arab countries are still conventional and patterned and have not yet used the innovative methods developed in this sphere. Many of the Arab countries also suffer from the obstacles facing the illiteracy eradication march and embodied in financial, administrative, technical and social obstacles.

Dr al-Sallum has also said that the rate of illiteracy in the Arab homeland is the highest in the world generally and amounts to 73 percent of the population whereas this rate doesn't exceed 3.5 percent in the advanced countries (Europe and the United States).

And do you know that the efforts exerted to deal with illiteracy with all the material and human resources made available to them in the Arab countries have not absorbed more than two percent of the total number of illiterates found in the Arab homeland at present and that of this absorbed number only one percent overcomes its illiteracy successfully every year!

This means that the confrontation against Arab illiteracy is not realizing what we, as Arabs, aspire for because of the flaw in many aspects of the confrontation-- a flaw reflected in a number of indicators, including the absence and lack of abidance by the scientific approach in all the phases of action that are embodied in planning, implementation and followup.

Moreover, the illiteracy eradication agencies in many of the Arab countries lack the material resources necessary to confront the challenges of illiteracy.

Dr al-Sallum added: The problem of illiteracy must occupy a prominent place in the thinking of those who are in charge of drawing up and implementing the economic development plans in the Arab homeland because the trained and vigilant human element is the influential element in comprehending and carrying out these development plans. The illiterates in the agricultural and industrial production sectors are considered one of the biggest obstacles in the face of the implementation of these plans.

Role of Arab Education and Culture Organization

Our discussion then moved to another point and I asked Dr al-Sallum about the role of the Arab Education, Culture and Sciences Organization in eradicating the problem of illiteracy in the Arab homeland. Dr al-Sallum said:

Through its illiteracy eradication agency, the Arab Education, Culture and Sciences Organization performs a major role in eradicating illiteracy. A new and ready-to-implement Arab illiteracy eradication strategy has been formulated. This organization's most important efforts in this regard are:

Conducting training courses for instructors and supervisors in charge of adult education and illiteracy eradication.

Dispatching experts of adult education and illiteracy eradication to the Arab countries to help them prepare, implement and follow up plans for adult education and illiteracy eradication.

Setting up experimental projects for adult education and illiteracy eradication in the Arab countries, in addition to taking part in the projects founded by these countries.

Preparing educational materials for adult education and illiteracy eradication.

Advancing technical and in-kind aid in the sphere of adult education and illiteracy eradication in the Arab countries.

Spreading the call regarding the need to view and fight the problem of illiteracy with an approach based on scientific research.

Holding conferences and study symposiums to develop adult education and illiteracy eradication and taking part in the international and regional conferences and symposiums.

Issuing a periodic magazine under the supervision of the Arab Illiteracy Eradication Agency which contains the gist of the research and experiments concerning adult education and illiteracy eradication.

Organizing programs for familiarization visits for the officials in charge of adult education and illiteracy eradication to acquaint themselves with the adult education and illiteracy eradication activities in the Arab countries.

Formulating a new Arab strategy seeking to facilitate education for all Arab children on the basis of the view that the Arab man is the Arab nation's real and lasting capital.

Number of Illiteracy Eradication Schools

Regarding the number of adult education schools in the academic year 1400-1401 of the Hegira, Dr al-Sallum said:

The number of boy schools spread throughout the kingdom is 1,827 schools. These are the schools controlled by the Ministry of Education. There are other adult education and illiteracy eradication schools that are controlled by the General Directorate of Women's Education, the National Guard, the army, the civil defense, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Interior.

As for the number of adult education and illiteracy eradication schools in Riyadh District alone, they amount to 137 night schools for this year (1400-1401 of the Hegira).

Regarding instructors in adult education schools this year, Dr al-Sallum said:

The number of instructors under the control of the Ministry of Education in the academic year 1400-1401 of the Hegira is 5,518 instructors and school principals. But if you mean the number of instructors in the illiteracy eradication schools in Riyadh, then the number is approximately 520 instructors and principals.

Adult Education Budget Is 100 Million Riyals

Regarding the budget of the adult education schools, his excellency said:

The Ministry of Education's budget for only those who work in night schools for the eradication of illiteracy amounts to 100 million riyals, of which Riyadh's share is nearly 10 million riyals. This is in addition to the distribution of textbooks to students free of charge. These books cost many million riyals throughout the kingdom. This is an indication that the state, may God reward it, is concerned with adult education and illiteracy eradication and that it supports this effort materially, morally and administratively and that it is trying ceaselessly to eradicate illiteracy in our country.

Regarding the volume of work in Riyadh district insofar as adult education and illiteracy eradication is concerned, his excellency said:

The work is sizeable and there are concentrated efforts to teach adults and eradicate their illiteracy. The district supervises 137 illiteracy eradication schools, maintains technical and administrative followup of them, issues certificates to those who have freed themselves of illiteracy and conducts comprehensive surveys on bedouin living areas and farmer settlements to open night schools in them.

The district also studies the night schools' needs of record books, textbooks, accomplishment reports, demonstration means and all the equipment necessary for the schools. The district also participates in the international illiteracy eradication day and the Arab illiteracy eradication day with pamphlets, posters and articles published in the press on illiteracy issues to urge illiterates to join schools, study and learn.

The district also organizes annual training courses for people working in adult education and illiteracy eradication schools to familiarize them with the dimensions and effects of the problem of illiteracy and with the efforts exerted to solve it locally and to introduce both old and new teachers working in the field of adult education and illiteracy eradication to all the new developments in this field.

Summer Illiteracy Eradication Campaigns

[Words missing] summer illiteracy eradication [campaigns] conducted in remote areas to educate nomadic bedouins and farmers. The district also participates in organizing the sessions of the Riyadh Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication Subcommittee, coordinates the efforts of the various local authorities and

agencies, follows up on and evaluates the district's illiteracy eradication plan and supervises the tests, transfers and certificates for the first and second half of the academic year insofar as adult education and illiteracy eradication schools are concerned.

Problems of Adult Education in Kingdom

Our dialogue then moved to the problems of adult education and illiteracy eradication and Dr al-Sallum said:

The problems facing the illiteracy eradication movement and that obstruct realization of the goals of the illiteracy eradication program are focused in the following:

The high rate of loss [of students] and refrainment of citizens in the illiteracy eradication schools.

Lack of awareness on the part of most instructors in night schools of the psychological characteristics, problems and true motives of the adults.

The incompatibility of many of the curricula w/ h the experiences of the adult students.

In conclusion, Dr al-Sallum said:

There is no doubt that the early beginnings of serious work to deal with the issue of illiteracy have started. The Ministry of Education officials are conducting concerted studies to develop the work in adult education and illiteracy eradication. I believe that there are some proposals to deal with these problems over which a scientific discussion can be held, including:

Studying the possibility of giving students some moral and material incentives through which a contribution can be made to solving the problem of (illiterates who refrain from joining studies because they want to increase their incomes).

Studying and analyzing all the curricula and amending many of them to make them compatible with the experience of the students and with their educational level.

Devoting attention to training all people working in the sphere of adult education and illiteracy eradication.

Appealing to people working in adult education and illiteracy eradication schools to exert more efforts, to be more serious and to adhere to their responsibility.

Including in the instructor [training] programs theoretical and practical topics that help in teaching adults so that these instructors may be prepared during their courses in the teachers institutes.

Al-'Ajaji Discusses Adult Education

Answering a question on the Arab illiteracy eradication strategy, 'Abd-al-Rahman Sa'ud al-'Ajaji, director of the technical section of the Riyadh Education Department, said:

The problem of illiteracy has become a burden from which most of the Arab countries suffer due to the inability of the human, material and technical resources to deal with the causes, manifestations and consequences of this problem.

The Arab illiteracy eradication strategy, approved by the third conference held in Baghdad in 1976, is embodied in a working paper for the eradication of illiteracy. The provisions of this paper are to be carried out in the next 15 years.

This Arab strategy is to be implemented in three phases:

1. The phase of preparation and organization, lasting 2 years (1397-99 of the Hegira).
2. The phase of implementation, lasting 8 years (1399-1407 of the Hegira).
3. The phase of liquidation, lasting 5 years (1407-1411).

The Arab illiteracy eradication strategy is based on the following 10 principles:

First, the cultural concept of illiteracy, in the sense of developing the concept of illiteracy [eradication] beyond its narrow framework of reading, writing and arithmetic to include the employment of these skills to realize positive participation in building the new Arab society.

Second, link the illiteracy eradication efforts to the comprehensive development efforts. This is embodied primarily in labor training and education, in agricultural guidance, in developing society and in channeling the efforts toward building the good citizen.

Third, pan-Arabizing the effort in the sphere of illiteracy eradication so as to deal with the problem by setting up an Arab bank for manpower and financial wealth to be used in eradicating illiteracy in the financially incapable Arab countries.

Fourth, the importance of the political decision in the comprehensive campaign as a starting point for implementing the illiteracy eradication plan.

Fifth, channeling and employing the human capabilities to deal with the problem of illiteracy.

Sixth, eliminating the sources of illiteracy by making elementary education compulsory for all.

Seventh, realizing integration between regular (scholastic) education and special education (adult education and illiteracy eradication) at the levels of planning and implementation.

Eighth, adopting the scientific method of planning and followup in dealing with the problem of illiteracy.

Ninth, using material, social and moral incentives in the comprehensive confrontation operation.

Tenth, constant followup and evaluation of all the phases, steps and goals.

Al-Dughayri Also Speaks

Talking about his memories in adult education and illiteracy eradication, Sulayman al-Dughayri, the director of al-Tidhkariyah Night School, has said:

In 1372 of the Hegira, night schools began to open their doors, starting with 2 schools in the city of Riyadh, namely: Al-Ahliyah [National] School (currently al-Tidhkariyah School) and al-Muhammadiyah School which consisted of two sections, one for students and one for teachers.

Speaking about the recompense paid to those working in adult education schools at the time, al-Dughayri said: A teacher was paid 120 riyals monthly, a principal 200 riyals and a janitor 50 riyals. Now, each of them is paid one-half his monthly salary or 50 percent [on top of the regular monthly salary].

B494

CSO: 4802

RESOLUTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS SEMINAR SUMMARIZED

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 14 Dec 80 p 6

[Article: "Seminar on Human Rights in Islam"]

[Text] The seminar on human rights under Islam was concluded this evening with the approval of a final report containing the recommendations of the six committees that have been deliberating for 6 days beginning last Tuesday. The reports of the six committees were discussed yesterday at a general session held in the morning. Later that evening another general session was held to discuss the reports of the first, second, third and fourth committees.

The first committee which dealt with the subject of development, ownership, and distribution of wealth made a series of specific recommendations related to economic reforms. The recommendations included the following:

--A call to review the distribution of income and wealth for the purpose of improving the present system;

--A call to regulate the exercise of private and public ownership rights in a manner more conducive to social justice and equality;

--A call for tax reforms to ensure greater productivity and social justice;

--Claiming that salaries and wages alone are not sufficient to cover the cost of living and banish need, the committee recommended a review of the salary and wage structure in relation to the entire economy and called for substantial increases in spending on education, health and other services.

The report of the [first] committee gave a glimpse into how the committee felt about the issues under discussion and how it planned to support its recommendations in the general debate before the final report [on the work of the six committees] is released. The following items were included in the preliminary report of the first committee:

1. The committee is unanimous in its belief that the Islamic economic system as delineated in the Koran and the Sunnah [the body of Islamic religious laws] is complete. Economic inequities are the result of failure to apply the stipulations of the Koran and the Sunnah.

2. The committee is satisfied that the Koran and the Sunnah incorporate the fundamental principles on which a just economic order may be established and developed in the Islamic world.

3. The committee expressed the hope that serious efforts will be made to supplant the present reactionary, colonialist, economic system with one based on Islamic principles of justice and equality. An Islamic system, according to the committee, is humanity's only hope for ending economic and social exploitation and bridging the widening gap between rich and poor.

4. The committee recommended a cautious and decisive [sic] review of current legislation relating to "popular" economic conceptions, their classification and designations with a view to:

a) developing a comprehensive, acceptable economic strategy, and b) ensuring that national constitutions include a bill of economic rights consistent with Islamic principles.

5. The committee recommended a program of aid to the poor on the local and world levels.

6. The committee recommended that Islamic nations take effective measures to insure that the people have a voice in the decision making process at all levels.

7. The committee recommended that Islamic nations incorporate social and economic rights provisions in their laws.

8. The committee recommended that Islamic laws be re-written and updated linguistically in a manner that will not jeopardize their substance, but make them more positive and distinctive. Simultaneously, the committee encouraged the adoption of measures to increase and strengthen moral awareness as one means of hastening social changes.

9. The committee recommended that scientific and academic research on the governmental and non-governmental levels be encouraged in order to evolve a realistic and yet modern Islamic [social] philosophy, one that is capable of meeting the challenges of modern times.

Modern Education and Islamic Concepts

The initial discussions of the second committee centered on Islamic education in modern society. The committee prepared a set of recommendations for inclusion in the final report. Here is a sample:

1. Every man and woman has a natural right to an appropriate share of learning according to a sound method of education.

2. A sound educational philosophy is one that is based on the Islamic understanding of the human person as a delegate for God on earth. Islamic scholars, meeting first in Mecca in 1977 and later in Islamabad in 1980, have defined the purposes of education, and laid down general curricular recommendations.

3. Recognizing that the world lacks an Islamic understanding of education and knowledge in general, the Islamic Cultural Center is urged to give top priority to fundamental research in the foundations of Islamic education and to the transmission of its findings.

[The next paragraph does not contain a sentence. We give a contextual interpretation.]

4. The committee notes that the Islamabad conference has resulted in a new elementary curriculum to which all Islamic nations have been encouraged to adhere. A new secondary school curriculum has also been established and will be put into use 6 years from now to coincide with the time when students in the new elementary curriculum are ready to begin secondary school. Textbooks for the new secondary curriculum are not ready yet.

5. The seminar participants urge the Islamic Cultural Center in Mecca to speed up the preparation of elementary, secondary and tertiary school programs for boys and girls, and to make these available within 1 year to all Islamic nations. In the participants' collective view, this is the only way to combat the spread of secular, materialistic views, and to instill fundamental humanistic values consistent with Islam. Students, according to the seminar participants, will not be able to resist the onslaught of materialistic ideas without this type of school program.

6. The committee [or the general conference] urges the Islamic nations to take a unified position at UNESCO conferences on education.

Rights of Minorities

The third committee debated two subjects: "Minorities and Human Rights," and "The Right to Live and Work Under Islam." Some of its views follow:

1. The right to work is fundamental and is on a par with the right to live. The right to work presupposes the freedom to select one's occupation in a manner consistent with one's abilities, preparation, and talents.

2. The government has an obligation to provide the workers with the tools needed to carry on their occupations, to be just and equitable in providing work opportunities, and to provide job training when necessary.

The committee made these recommendations:

1. There is no need to define the term "minority." We use it in its commonly accepted meaning which includes ethnic, linguistic, religious and social groups--groups that are often subjected to unequal treatment wherever they are found.

2. Non-political, international organizations and agencies such as the World Association of Lawyers must pay greater attention to the plight of minorities throughout the world, and to seek ways to stop their unjust treatment. One way to accomplish this is to hold a series of seminars and conferences to study the

problems of minorities, to direct attention to them, and to appeal to the human conscience for a resolution of their problems.

3. The [UN] human rights declaration must make a more specific and comprehensive reference to the rights of minority groups.

4. The Islamic nations have an obligation to assist in an educational effort to publicize the message of Islam, to dispel misunderstandings and fears about its nature and present it as a religion of universal love and brotherhood.

5. Since efforts to help minorities overseas are at best scanty and without focus, we encourage all minority groups to stand on their own feet. We urge them to scale the ladder of scientific and economic progress. We urge the Islamic world to offer all possible assistance to minority groups in an unobtrusive manner, one that will not endanger these groups' identity or security.

6. This committee is aware that Islamic minorities in the West have begun to lose their identities and to acquire the cultural complexion of the countries where they live. We are convinced that this is not the result of deliberate policies by the governments of the countries involved, but rather the outcome of being attracted to modern Western culture, and ignorance of Islamic values. The committee therefore urges that provisions be made to give these minorities an opportunity to study the Koran, Arabic, and Islamic literature.

Equality Before the Koran

The fourth committee dealt with two subjects: "Equality Before the Law," and "The Treatment of Minorities and Foreigners." It discussed and accepted for final adoption a research paper by Dr 'Abd al-Karim Zaydan—who was absent—delineating the position of Islam with regard to minorities. According to this paper, Islam did not leave the treatment of non-Muslim minorities to the whim of the rulers or the majority of the people, but made it an indivisible part of Islamic law, a law that derives ultimately from God. For this reason Muslims have always accepted the laws governing the treatment of minorities as a fixed part of the laws governing Islamic conduct. In view of the fact that Islamic law is the greatest and most compassionate set of laws known to man, the committee concurs with the author of the study in calling upon minorities to support the establishment of al-Sharia'h [Islamic religious laws] as the law of the land where they live.

The first principle relating to the treatment of non-Muslims holds that Muslims and non-Muslims are equal, and that both are citizens of the Islamic state. The Muslim derives his right to citizenship from his faith; the non-Muslim rests his right to citizenship on the principle of loyalty to the state. This is the reason non-Muslims are referred to as "al-Thummiyyin," "al-Mu'ahidin," or "al-Musta'minin," all three terms signifying those who have formally pledged allegiance to the state. Historically, some pledges of loyalty were permanent, others temporary.

Legal Protection of Human Rights

The fifth committee studied three research papers on this subject submitted by Drs Salah al-Din al-Nahi, Uthman 'Abd al-Malik al-Salih and Ihsan al-Kayyali. A sample of the ideas explored by the committee, and which will be submitted for inclusion in the final report follow:

1. The committee notes that it is not proper to pass judgment on al-Shari'ah [Islamic religious laws] on the basis of the various Islamic political systems that have flourished at one time or another in Islamic history. Rather, any such judgment must be made on the basis of those general principles that derive from al-Sharia'h and other Islamic legislative sources.
2. The committee affirms that for the past 14 centuries Islam has held the distinction of being the first religion to enshrine the doctrine of human rights. In this respect, Islam has set the example for all modern declarations in the area of human rights.
3. The committee also affirms that Islam has been the first religion to recognize the sovereignty of law, and that, unlike modern states, the Islamic state ever since its inception has been characterized by its adherence to the laws of the wise legislator [God].
4. The committee further affirms that the Shari'ah ever since it was given to man by God, has been characterized by the unsurpassed justness of its laws and by its ability to balance the interest of society against the rights of the offender in the area of crime and punishment. In this respect, the Shari'ah has been the forerunner of all modern laws, none of which achieved this degree of refinement until the end of the 18th century.
5. The committee affirms that the Shari'ah has been the first body of laws to strike a balance between the right of the individual to freedom and security as well as the right of society to prevent crime on the one hand, and the right of the accused to certain fundamental protections during investigation, trial, and the execution of criminal sentences on the other.
6. The committee goes on record to condemn the current practice by some countries of appointing judges on the basis of their party or political affiliation in violation of Islamic legal principles that expressly forbid this type of practice.
7. The committee affirms that torture and kidnapping with the explicit or implicit consent of the authorities are clear violations of Islamic principles. It calls for a halt in the exercise of these morally reprehensible practices, and urges the authorities to adopt and adhere to a public document spelling out what the authorities may or may not do.
8. The committee recommends that the study of human rights in Islam be made mandatory in all schools. It urges each government to wage an objective educational campaign to inform the public of the role of Islam in the area of human rights.

The Status of Women in Islam

The sixth committee dealt with the status of women in Islam. It debated three papers presented by Drs Shahinzaan Shakirshi, Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi and 'Ali Mun'im. The three papers focused on the role of women in public life and were supported by documentary evidence. In cases where there is ambiguity on the subject, the committee decided to resort to the Koran itself. After much discussion, the committee made a number of recommendations pertaining to the role of women in Islam and modern society. Foremost among these recommendations are the following:

1. Priority must be given to the education of women and the creation of comprehensive curricula that are consistent with the Sharia'h.
2. The rights of women must be guaranteed by means of new legislation at the national level. Judges must be trained properly in order that they may apply the tenets of al-Sharia'h in a manner consistent with the public good.
3. The committee urges the creation of various committees to study all matters relating to women in the areas of education, work, health and the law. Such studies must be monitored on a regular basis.
4. Aware of the great esteem in which Islam holds women by virtue of that religion's position on human rights in general, the committee recommends that all Islamic and Arab nations ratify all international agreements relating to women's rights. The committee is of the view that all of these agreements are consonant with the Islamic position, and that their ratification will contribute to the protection of the rights of women on an international scale, as well as underscore the role of Islam as a leader in the area of human rights.

9063

CSO: 4802

AFGHAN EDUCATION SYSTEM TAKEN OVER BY SOVIETS

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 15 Jan 81 pp 3, 10

[Text] After the aggression in Afghanistan, Russia has paid special attention to strengthen her control over the education system in the country. Under the name of higher education, great numbers of students are being sent to Moscow and other cities in Russia so that they can be given ideological training and made pro-Russian after "brainwashing." The American Ministry of Internal Affairs issued an annual report of events from 27 December 1979 to 27 December 1980 especially dealing with human problems. The report states that in the beginning of October alone, 1,500 students were selected for education and training in Russian institutions. The report further states that Russian advisors and officials are now organizing the ruling party, government machinery and educational institutions under their own scheme from the ground up, and the entire structure is being changed. Russia wants to make Afghanistan one of her states, but there are many obstacles in her path. Seventy-five percent of the territory is controlled by the freedom fighters and their opposition is so strong that in 1 year, Russia could not strengthen her hold. To enhance her own economic interests, Russia constructed three bridges over the Om River and now plans to lay railroad tracks. The report states that because of resistance, Russia has sustained inconceivable damages. She has been left alone in the world and has been badly criticized by every international organization, and is still being criticized. Her international economic relations have been badly damaged. Besides military actions, Russia is also assuming the expenses of running the Afghan Government; and now she has to provide 80 percent of the total support. She was thinking that with the passage of time, the world would forget this issue. But the continued influx of Afghans, and above all, the Afghan freedom fighters' amazing resistance, have made it a strong issue before the world's conscience. Accusations against Russia are increasing and its image as a superpower is being fragmented on the international level.

9778

CSO: 4909

RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS MINISTRY DECIDES TO CLOSE COPTIC CHURCH

Paris LE MONDE in French 5 Feb 81 p 4

[Article by Daniel Junqua: "The Faithful of the Coptic Orthodox Church No Longer Have a Place of Worship"]

[Text] Algiers--For nearly a month the faithful of the Coptic Orthodox Church--mainly Egyptian teachers--have not had a place of worship. Father Amonios, their chaplain, estimates his flock at 1,500, distributed among 500 families throughout the territory. Since 1975 they had had the church of Sainte-Marcienne, in Algiers, placed at their disposal by Cardinal Duval. It was taken away from them following a decision of the Algerian Ministry for Religious Affairs.

The affair broke out last September: while the seminar on Islamic thought was taking place, the police put seals on the huge wooden doors of the edifice. They were removed a few days later, after the archbishop of Algiers had promised to give the building to the Algerian authorities. It was agreed, however, that it would remain open to the Copts until 6 January, the date on which they celebrate Christmas. Both Copts and Catholics hoped that the affair could be settled in the meantime. At the end of October Bishop Paromios, member of the Ecumenical Council of Churches, came to Algiers to try to meet with the minister for religious affairs. He had to leave after a week without having been received, while the decision to transform the church into a mosque was confirmed.

In the presbytery below the church which still sheltered him for a few days, Father Amonios, with a thick beard, wearing an ample black cassock, explained: "We are told to pray with the Catholics, since we are Christians. They want to assimilate us into one sect. But there are too many of us. We pray in our language, in Arabic. Our services are very long, and we have special rites. And the Catholics, who have recently given three more churches to the Ministry for Religious Affairs, have just enough buildings for themselves. In fact, it is our very existence that is no longer recognized, our existence as a church entitled to a specific place of worship like the Catholics, the Protestants or the Jews."

The affair is stirring up a certain amount of emotion in Christian circles, especially since Algeria, while proclaiming Islam the state religion, has up to now constituted a model of tolerance and coexistence among the religions of the Book. Furthermore, Christians and Jews are a very small minority.

9719

CSO: 4400

ALGERIA

GAS PIPELINE LINKED TO ITALY TO OPEN IN OCTOBER 1981

Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE in French 30 Jan-5 Feb 81 pp 14, 15

[Article by Y. Ould-Moussa: "Algeria-Italy Gas Pipeline the Instrument of a New Strategy"]

[Text] The Algeria-Italy gas pipeline is inaugurating a veritable world first by giving concrete form to the symbol of a cooperation that is well understood.

This achievement is, in fact, only the logical outcome of a policy of diversifying our foreign trade, which is aimed at building our economic independence on sound and solid bases. This policy is also in keeping with a concern for international cooperation which aims at and respects the reciprocal and mutual interests of the members of the international community. In this context it can be asserted without false modesty that the gas pipeline from Algeria to Italy via Tunisia is a classic example.

After a few years of negotiations on exporting Algerian gas to the Italian market, our country, through SONATRACH and in association with an Italian company, in 1967 began the process of studying the technical and economic feasibility of a system of gas distribution by a pipeline that included an underwater crossing.

In October 1977 the negotiations ended with a SONATRACH/ENI [National Hydrocarbons Agency] agreement concerning delivery by Algeria of a total quantity of 295 billion cubic meters of gas to the Algerian border over a 25-year period. Deliveries are to begin late in 1981, with an annual flow of 12.4 billion cubic meters.

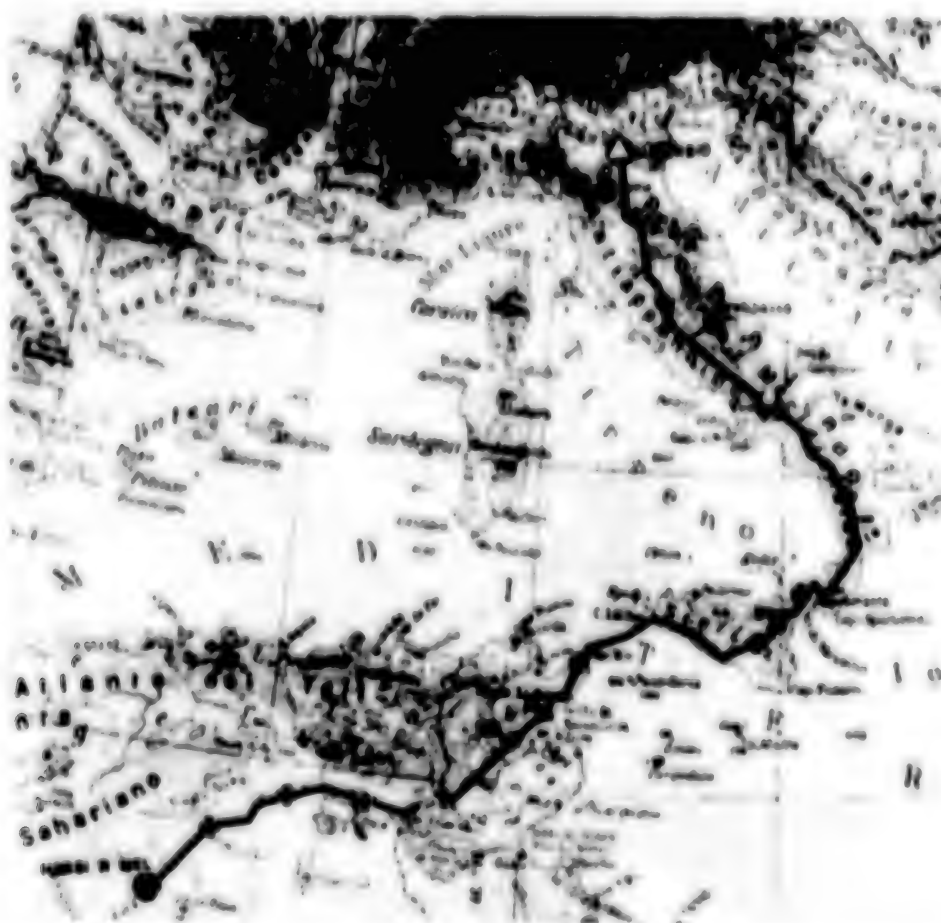
For the section that must cross the Sicily Channel, which represents an important unit of underwater work, the financing is shared equally by Algeria and Italy. In the first phase of the project, it was necessary to examine and appraise all suitable and safe technical elements available and then to study and evaluate those for which there was neither precedent nor adequately identified technical support. A preliminary maritime reconnaissance also had to be carried out.

Phase I of the project dealt with meteorological and hydrological surveys, underwater photos and diving, as well as seismic and bathymetric profiles and analysis of the sea bed and its geology. In Phase II the project went ahead, in the area of refining the parts of the survey that had been clarified in Phase I,

with a detailed survey of the underwater trunk and the development of several pipe-laying techniques specifically applicable to the crossing to Sicily, and also in the area of the full mathematical analysis of the project and the recommendations on the type of barge¹ to adopt.

The Algeria-Italy gas pipeline constitutes a technical work estimated at close to \$3.4 billion. The Algerian section which runs from Hassi R'Mel to Oued Safsaf on the Tunisian border, 550 km in length, represents a value of \$702 million.

As for the Tunisian portion from Oued Safsaf to Cap-Bon, it costs almost \$533 million to cover a distance of 370 km.



From Cap-Bon it is the underwater section, 158 km long, which goes toward Sicily and for which Algeria has a 50-percent share in the completion of the work, valued overall at \$532 million. Then comes the Italian land portion, 1,418 km in total length and estimated at \$1.6 billion, which will make it possible to supply natural gas to the Manerbio region, north of Rome.

¹ Barge: floating platform used in laying underwater pipeline.

It is certain, right now, that the scope of the project, covering a land and sea distance of about 2,500 km, represents a top-notch success in the field of international economic and technical cooperation.

For the Algerian section of the gas pipeline, Hassi R'Mel-Oued Safsaf, the drilling and welding are finished. However, certain operations still have to be carried out, involving mechanical assembly of the concentrated work (sampling valves), installation of the final heat shields, the telecommunications system, the hydrostatic tests, the restoration of the sites and, finally, construction of living centers for the operation of the pipeline.

Mr Noun, director of the distribution systems of the ENN, explained to us that all this work will be finished around September 1981. With a starting terminal at Hassi R'Mel, the pipeline of the Algerian section was built with 48-inch pipe and the Algerian companies met the requirements for the success of this undertaking, in particular SNS (National Steel Company), which supplied 116 km of pipes, and the SNTR for transportation.

As for the Tunisian section, it is to be ready for filling in July 1981. With regard to the marine portion, the work of laying began in June 1979, and three lines of 20-inch pipe have now been welded and laid. Still to be completed are the support and bracing of the lines, the hydrostatic and dryness tests, and the adjustment of the entry and exit pipeline terminals, and the mechanical assembly of the pipeline terminals.

It can be said now that with the beginning of the gas flow planned for September 1981, the completion of this maritime section has demonstrated the capacity of our companies to surmount all the technical difficulties and to exploit judiciously the principles of an intelligent and effective cooperation.

With a starting terminal linked to the Cap-Bon compression station which includes five turbocompressor sets and three pipelines 155 km in length with a 20-inch diameter, the transport capacity of the maritime section is 18 billion cubic meters of gas per year to Italy.

At a maximum depth of 400 to 600 meters, this underwater gas pipeline required the sustained efforts of the Algerian and Italian experts to overcome all the technical difficulties of such an achievement--which can rightfully be rated as a world first--with the putting into service of the barge "Castor VI," a regular factory. This gas pipeline, which is the property of Algeria and Italy, will enable our country to sell its natural gas at a good price FOB at the border and eliminate many economic and political constraints which are always present in international trade relations, and especially on the world energy market.

The gas battle which our country is waging finds in this achievement a preferential instrument of its policy of diversifying foreign trade while not yielding in any way on the economic corollaries of its political sovereignty.

The month of October 1981 will undoubtedly be a decisive turning point in the nature and the scope of our national energy policy, in which gas has an important place and occupies a central position in our future international economic relation.

So, mark October of this year for the inauguration of a new phase of control of our national resources and their optimal valorization in conformity with the objectives of our economic development.

9719

CSO: 4400

RAJA'I'S GOVERNMENT LAUDED FOR 'ABSOLUTE POPULARITY'

Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 26 Jan 81 p 12

[Text] Mr Raja'i pointed out in a gathering of people from Sabzevar that the government is not one or two persons. Rather, 36 million Iranians are members of the cabinet.

Although this expression may appear to be possibly salted with exaggeration, its real meaning is not. It is true, and truer now than at any other time!

If you want the truth, it must be said that from the beginning of the revolution's victory, we did not have a "government" in the meaning of past eras. We had neither a government that had the command and authority of governments of the past regime, nor a government that centralized everyone in itself. We had such a government neither at the time of the provisional government nor now that the government is elected by the Majles, which is in turn chosen by the people.

We did not have a government which was established on the pinnacle of a "pyramid" of executive power, and which announced its commands to the furthest crannies of the base by pressing buttons. Nor do we want such a government! Because such a government is an outgrowth of a dictatorial system and a despot. It is the outgrowth of an order which looks at the majority of 36 million as slaves, and often indeed as corpses, and expects blind obedience from everyone.

Such a system built from "above" has no relation to what is "below." Its creator is a foreign power or a "representative" of a foreign power. And because it comes from "outside," it has nothing to do with the inner pains of the masses, and because its success lies in its own self-gratification, it constantly leans on the "centralizing" pyramid and is opposed to the slightest lack of centralization or to a "number of centers." Thus the fewer members it has, the more successful it is in reaching its goal.

It is certain that the existence of the "Raja'i" cabinet in comparison with such a government and such a cabinet appears to be contrary to customs and "supernatural."

One would think that we had forgotten what persons made the revolution and what persons created the Islamic Republic? Have we forgotten that from the day that the republic was founded what persons, what institutions what people faithfully preserved and guarded it?

Did we not see who provided security in the months after the revolution when there was no police, gendarmarie or army? Who guarded the dangerous alleys of the cities against the thousands of weapons in the hands of counterrevolutionaries? Who watched the borders?

With the start of Iraqi aggression, do we not see what persons from the farthest-flung points of Iran set out for the front and are sacrificing their lives and property for the honor and exaltation of this land? Which of these persons and institutions were created by the "government?" Which ministry framed the plan for the unprecedented sympathy, compassion, coordination and cooperation of the people with each other?

Who organizes the astounding program to despatch a "sea" of monetary and material aid to the war fronts? What organization is it whose commands sends crowds of tens of thousands to the front to give their lives?

Do you imagine that if we had a "government" of the sort of governments that we are familiar with, such unprecedented actions could be achievable? Do you imagine that we would be capable of victory over all those various plots we have witnessed?

Do you imagine that we would have been so successful in the rationing plan, the reconstruction crusade, sending aid to war victims and dozens of other popular plans? Never, never!

Our success against domestic and foreign foes, against the world-devouring United States and its domestic and regional pawns, is completely indebted to this "lack of government". Or to say it better, indebted to a government in which all the people, all 36 million Iranians, from the first day onwards had potential and actual membership.

In the long history of this country we have never heard of an era in which such matters have been in the hands of the people themselves, and the nation's individuals have to some degree, in some way, had a hand in the country's administration. An Iranian has never in any era been granted such an opportunity of being allowed to participate in such a popular government.

It is certain that such a government encounters problems in practice that we did not see in past governments because it does not enjoy the "centralization and command" of government as understood by Western liberals. We are confronted with difficult circumstances and insufficiencies which we did not anticipate.

The reason is perfectly clear. In a cabinet of 36 million persons there are naturally a thousand times more tastes and views than in a cabinet of say, 36 persons, and executive affairs cannot be carried out at the same speed as that of a small-member cabinet. Nevertheless, because all the people have membership in it, every member has a responsibility for every matter, whether good or evil.

They have set all the people talking about the "number of decisionmaking centers", which is really nothing but troublesome discord that occurs with a government "of the people by the people." There is no doubt that the existence of such a government with the characteristics which we have enumerated does not suit the taste of many, and in the view of another group it appears to be a "trick, abnormal, ineffective and inept."

The destruction of a 2,500 year old habit and a 2,500 year-old understanding is not possible in 1 or 2 years. For the first time in 25 centuries the Iranian people have a share in the government and government of the people by the people must be applied.

In the transfer of power from those kinds of "governments" to the people, turbulence, deviation, blunders and mistakes are a natural matter, whether we like it or not. But for those persons who have no confidence in the power of the people or who are themselves by nature a government "of the people by the people", such a state appears to be "unnatural." The uproar that they have created over the "Raja'i" cabinet springs from this very source.

A cabinet of the people naturally favors popular aspects, public dealings and public opinion in its conduct with the people. It thus lacks the pyramids, instruments and agents which dictatorial, monopolistic and aristocratic regimes have at their disposal.

Such a regime lacks the pomp and splendor peculiar to the "idolatrous" regimes which Iran has been acquainted for the last 25 centuries. The very lack of ornament and gaudiness of this cabinet of the people by the people will set the greedy, the plunderers, the over-westernized, and those enamoured of aristocratic trappings among the ranks of the irreconcilable foes.

On the eve of the revolution's second anniversary, this sincere friend who believes in the Islamic republic and in its creator, namely the nation of 36 million Iranians, gives the unpleasant news to the government's opponents that as long as this republic stands, we are connected to a cabinet in which all 36 million Iranians are members, whether its prime minister is Raja'i or Raja'i's brother. Woe the day that the people do not have membership in such a cabinet!

9597

CSO: 4906

IRAN

LIBERATION FRONT DENOUNCES U.S.-BAHRAIN COOPERATION

Tehran SOBH-E AZADEGAN in Persian 4 Jan 81 p 11

[Text] In a statement issued in Paris, Bahrain Islamic Liberation Front condemned the anti-Islamic and anti-human acts committed by the mercenary regime of the Al Khalifa on "Arba'in" [religious mourning day] and the following evening, after the Moslem people of Bahrain had turned religious ceremonies into a march and to political and religious mournings in support of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Following is the text of the statement:

In the name of God, the Merciful

The rulers of (The Pharaonic) Al Khalifa would not refrain from violating the sanctity of the religious months of Moharram and Safar, and the religious traditions that the Holy Koran wants to be revived

In addition to their unlimited submission to the imperialists and colonialists in their efforts to plunder the country, they (Al Khalifa) have turned Bahrain into a pasture for a good life for criminal America so that it could build military bases there and conspire against the Islamic revolution and the struggle by the oppressed nations....

In addition to these mercenary acts, they (Al Khalifa) had begun to step on all divine and human values during the holy months....and have negated all that is called truth, right and justice.

In the months of Moharram and Safar [religious mourning months] of this year, in every day of which our people created great new epics of 'Ashura* against the forces of Bani-Omieh* (Al Khalifa), and every day of which was the day of Ashura for the people of Bahrain, and every part of it Karbala*:

On the eve of Arba'in-e Hosseyni*, large groups of mourners would march, and people in various towns of Bahrain would carry slogans, demonstrating their devotion to the principles of the revolution of Husseyn. In all the slogans and the placards, the Ba'thist order and the reactionary systems supporting the aggression of the Zionist order against the Islamic Republic of Iran were condemned. They proclaimed their solidarity with the Moslem people of Iran under the leadership of Imam Khomeyni and showed their abhorrence of the Pharaonic regime

of the Al Khalifa. But the hated regime attacked the Moslem people present at the ceremonies and resorted to poisonous tear gas, the use of which was forbidden by international conventions.

Yet, on the eve of Arba'in and the following evening, mourning revolutionary groups began marching in all towns in Bahrain, carrying the same placards and repeating the same slogans they had on the eve of Arba'in. These groups were again met by the mercenary agents of the Khalifa but were able to continue with their marches until late at night.

The Islamic Liberation of Bahrain, in addition of praising the action of the faithful and revolutionary masses, which are signs of their resistance and revolt against Al Khalifa, urges them to continue their struggle, and to tell the small group of the mercenary Al Khalifa, that the end of their illegal rule is at hand, as short as a wink... Because the victory of Islam is near.... And God will help those who will give help.

The Islamic Liberation Front of Bahrain.

Paris, 30-12-80; 9-10-59

*[The months of Moharram and Safar are observed as religious mourning months by the Shi'ite Moslems. The death, or martyrdom, of Imam Hosseyn, the third Imam of the Shi'ites, occurred on the tenth of Moharram which is called 'Ashura, a mourning holiday. It took place in the plain of Karbala, in the present day Iraq. Arba'in, which occurs on 20 Safar, is also a religious mourning day during which the 40th day of the martyrdom of Imam Hosseyn is observed in special ceremonies. Bani-Umieh were the khalifs who ruled in Damascus and were rivals to Bani Hashems to which prophet Mohammad and most of his followers belonged. Bani-Umieh is considered usurpers by the Shi'ites and despised. This explains the comparison between the Bani-Umieh and the Al Khalifa rulers of Bahrain].

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CSO: 4906

AFP BLASTED FOR 'FALSE, BASELESS' REPORTING

Tehran ETTALA'AT in Persian 26 Jan 81 p 12

[Article by Dr Hoseyn Abutarabian]

[Text] On the first of Bahman [21 January 1981], the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY (AFP) sent a report concerning the reaction of Iranians to the release of the hostages, and in one part of this report wrote:

"On the whole, the city of Tehran was very clam, and people were busy with their everyday concerns. Only small groups of youths connected with leftist organizations marched in several of Tehran's main streets, chanting slogans against the release of the hostages."

Certainly everyone is acquainted with the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY, and is informed of its true nature: It tells lies about Iran as its second nature, nor does it refrain from sending reports about events in Iran that are false, absurd and completely baseless. In this regard, particularly with respect to the report of "youths connected to leftist organizations marching and chanting slogans against the release of the hostages," it becomes completely clear how this news agency has set about distorting the truth, and by altering a few words in the main part of the news, turns the matter upside down.

First, those persons who were opposed to the freeing of the hostages were not youths but were only tottering, grumbling old men who have lived long lives and still clearly remember the events of the period when the late Mollah Nasreddin was living. They were accustomed to wait by the Mollah's house until the Mollah's riding donkey and his son began to cavil, find fault and spit out their venom in order to compensate for their complex of "lost status."

Secondly, the opponents of the release of the hostages were not associated with leftist organizations, but rather are to be considered very genuine supporters of the right wing. Some of them are so rightwing that they believe: One must certainly move off to the country's right, and profit from the existence of the ruling ideology in China, a country located to the right of Iran.

Thirdly, the aforementioned opponents did not march in the streets. Instead they sat in the "office" and were busy winking at each other: You see, the time has finally come and it is our turn to show off!

Fourthly, they shouted no slogans whatsoever, but instead were busy being interviewed by newspapers opposed to the hostage-taking (excuse me, opposed to the hostages' release), and busy writing articles for the very same newspapers. So that, God willing, when their words had reached print, requisite sentences from them could be used for: Street corner placard writing, chanting by leftist youths, and occasionally preparation of foreign radios' political commentary.

And finally, the fifth lie of the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY was that the gentlemen about whom it made allegations were in no way opposed to the release of the hostages, nor are they now. Because from the very beginning of the affair they were shouting everywhere: The hostages must be freed, and the hostage-taking was such a big mistake that Iranian "human rights," i.e. salaries, are not being paid monthly from the master's treasure chest...the dissatisfaction and cries of opposition from these people whose adventures have been reported by the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY were not over the release of the hostages. Since they say: Why did you so "barbarically" detain a group of very distinguished men who held diplomatic passports and diplomatic immunity, and destroy the reputation of Iran in the eyes of international lawyers, statesmen and experts?

Or they say: Very well, if you had imagined that these respected gentlemen employees of the U.S. embassy! had undertaken to gather useful information about Iran for their country, that is to say, were "spying," and had set off in search of "dissatisfied scientists," and by means of "Ralph Shanmans" were searching for "Haji Sakharov," then you could very easily have leafed through the book of laws of diplomatic relations, and by using the article relating to "undesirable elements," have very respectfully issued the order for the expulsion of these diplomats, so that afterwards you wouldn't have been termed "savage, barbarian kidnappers and extortioners" by the respected office of the president of the United States, and also would not have been troubled by "a lack of economic growth" due to facing an economic boycott.

For the further information of the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY I would like to say that all these things we have mentioned are not the root of the matter nor the prime cause of the opposition of "youths connected to leftist organizations," because some believe that: "The ignorant do the same thing as the wise, except after inflicting great damage" (interview with Ebrahim Yazdi--in ENQELAB-E ESLAMI, 2 Bahman 1359 [22 January 1981]).

That is to say, one doctor of pharmacy is wiser than one electronic engineer, and so someone who struggled and suffered persecution and torture in the United States for years know the cure for the people's every ill better than someone who comfortably ate and slept and lived in the lap of luxury in a SAVAK prison for 7 years.

Or to say it more clearly, if this affair had been in his hands from the beginning, he certainly would not have permitted the Iranians to incline to savagery, and thus suffer all this damage on account of frozen assets, economic boycott and Saddam's attack. Since he could have eliminated all the grounds that led to the hostage-taking by a mere two or three meetings. That is to say, he could bring the Shah in manacles to Tehran from the United States, return all that cursed money to the last dinar to Iran, and get all that delayed U.S. military aid moving once again, settle the revolt in Kordestan and Gonbad and Khuzestan, and in the period of 1 year, bring Iran to such a point that the Americans would neither have attacked Tabas nor planned the coup d'etat plot of 18 Tir [29 July 80] nor would the Russians have brought Afghanistan under military occupation.

But the moment affairs fall into the hands of the ignorant, the United States, on account of his ignorance, is caused to suffer "great damage": Its president meets with a disastrous defeat, it displays a \$45 billion deficit, the scandal of the emptiness of its gold reserve is exposed, it loses its reputation and prestige, it is insulted by even its closest friends, the security of its "houses of thievery" is so disrupted that all the arab shaykhs withdraw their money from U.S. banks, and every one of its devoted servants across the globe is endangered by collapse.

Oh, if only the ignorant had realized that on 25 Bahman 1357 [14 February 1979], when the plan for the occupation of the U.S. spyhouse was wisely and intelligently neutralized by the sages, how much of the damage that was inflicted later on was prevented. That is to say, 5 days afterwards (1 Esfand 1357) [19 February 1979], the base of Mahabad was not captured, a month afterwards the revolt in Sanandaj did not erupt, 2 months later, they did not riot in Gonbad, 3 months later they did not create chaos in Khorramshahr and Abandan, they did not create the newspapers PAYGHAM-E EMRUZ, AYANDEGAN and BAMDAD for us, they did not concoct a plan to dissolve the Council of Notables, they did not despatch a flood of U.S. spies to Iran, and U.S. television did not perpetually show the revolutionary nation returning to the stone age. Above all, the pile of documentation of the U.S. plot which was issued from 25 Bahman 1357 to 12 Bahman 1358 [14 February 1979 to 1 February 80] was not prepared by those very same respected diplomats! in the U.S. embassy.

In the view of the sages who usually settle matters without "great damage," the Americans are so honorable that if they give a manly promise and undertake a contractual obligation such that upon release of the hostages, "we will return the Shah and all his wealth as well", then they will certainly do it. Nor was it necessary to keep the hostages for 14 months and create great glory for ourselves by standing up to and perserving in the face of the terrifying monster of the United States.

The wise ones usually think scientifically, and science too is on bad terms with the savagery of a handful of Iranian "barbarians" and their ignorant rulers which concluded by "great damage" being suffered. Basically, these sages who were in Paris strong, insisted that one could come to terms with the Shah scientifically and wisely, and get an honorable promise from him that "since the nation opposes you, leave Iran quietly and turn over the crown, throne and forces of law and order to us." But we saw that the ignorant did not listen to the sermons of the sages there, and completed the task, suffering "great damages" in the process.

While the imam spoke about the status and importance of keeping the hostages for a period of a year, and the value of this affair in neutralizing the U.S. puppet power, the sages talked about the "great damage" from this action of the ignorant. In fact they employ the abacus to arrive at an accounting of the profit and loss from the affair, lest there be a tiny violation of "businesslike" methods.

Truly, how far the FRENCH PRESS AGENCY was from the mark when it saw these wise, learned, farsighted businesslike bookkeepers as a handful of "leftist youths."

OFFICIAL DESCRIBES WARTIME SHIPPING OPERATIONS

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 17 Jan 81 p 15

[Text] During the Iraqi imposed war, the shipping lines of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by its contingency programs, saved some 7.35 billion rials. It will form the High council of Navigation Industry to review navigation problems. During the first three-quarters of the year, the Islamic Republic cargo ships carried, in 164 different trips, some 2.5 million tons of cargo, 500,000 tons more than the previous year.

In that connection, the managing-director of the shipping lines said" Up until the revolution, with the increase in the company's capital investment, and considering reserves and savings of the stock holders, the company's capital investment climbed to 3.85 billion rials.

He also added: For the first time in the history of the Iranian navigation, the shipping lines had a budget of its own in 1359 [21 Mar 80-20 Mar 81], and by planning we intend to achieve our goals of expansion, expanded training and increased investment. Referring to various activities by the company, Mr Erfani (the Managing-Director) said: In the year 1358 [21 Mar 79-20 Mar 80], the ships belonging to the company undertook 129 voyages, carrying a total of 2 million tons of goods. In the first three-quarters of the current year the figures were 164 voyages and 2.5 million tons of goods transported. The figures are expected to reach 190 voyages and 3 million tons of transported goods by the end of the year. This will make the share of the shipping lines of the Islamic Republic between 25 to 30 percent of the total goods transported. The figure for the last year was 12 percent. This expansion of activities were made possible by the sincere cooperation of our staff.

He further said: "With the low insurance rates, we will be collecting about 10 million dollars for reinsurance. With the increasing rate of insurance, insurance premium for five days equals the price of one cargo ship. We have not yet suffered any damages.

With the start of the conflict, Western powers and the superpowers put us under pressure. They raised their docking rates and insurance premiums. But with our well planned programs, the shipping lines of the Islamic Republic of Iran accepted the assurances for the ships carrying goods to Iran, and thus, saved some 6.75

million dollars. We also sent a mission to European countries and persuaded foreign companies to transport goods to Iran. This way, we saved 60 million dollars." Referring to navigation problems faced by the Islamic Republic, 'Erfani added: In connection with the unloading of Iranian goods at foreign ports, necessary actions were taken by the Committee for Sea Transportation, the Shipping Lines and Ports and Navigation Organization, in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce. Speaking about future plans of the Lines, he said: "The capacity of the lines, which is now only 500,000 tons, will grow in the next 5 to 7 years to between one and 1.5 million tons. Assuming that each vessel makes 3.5 trips a year, the total cargo carried throughout the year will reach to about 4.5 million tons. With the 3 million tons of cargo that will be transported by rented ships, the Shipping Lines will have the responsibility of transporting 7.5 million tons of cargo annually. Referring to navigation training, he noted that each vessel must take on 15 trained experts. He added that before nationalization (of the shipping company), of the 630 people working on board the vessels only 99 were Iranian nationals. The rest were from various Asian countries. After the nationalization, of the 570 people employed 219 are Iranians. In the next two years, he said, 150 more, who are being trained, will join them. 'Erfani said that in full capacity, 1300 trained experts were needed, while the figure at the present was only 350. He also said the government had been given plans for the expansion of the shipping company. Under the new charter, he added, all discriminations will be eliminated. He thanked the personnel, saying that their performance during the war had been exceptionally admirable. He said some had been killed by shelling while a number of them had been able to get out safe. He further said that 400 men who had been working in Khuninshahr and had lost their jobs, had been rehired and many more will soon be put to work again.

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CSO: 4906

VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN

Agriculture, Industry in East Azarbayjan

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 81 p 9

[Text] Tabriz--The head of the Center For The Expansion of Industrial Services in East Azarbayjan has made the following announcement: "142 various agricultural, industrial, development and services projects had been undertaken throughout the province this year. These projects were implemented by the center with the help of unemployed graduate students at a cost of 300 million tumans."

The above-mentioned projects included 48 agricultural ones. These are: 9 poultry projects, each with an annual production capacity of 370,000 chickens; six egg-producing chicken projects, each with a daily production capacity of 5 tons of eggs; three incubation projects, each with an incubating capacity of 930,000 chickens each time; 19 animal farms, each with a capacity of having 2,000 milk-producing cows; four sheep-raising projects, with a capacity of 400 sheep; two orchard and agriculture projects; one project for raising calves for their meat; and one dairy project with 450 cows which is producing more than 2 tons of milk daily for use by the pasteurized milk plant in Tabriz.

Also a sheep-raising project had been set up in Gargar which is being run by 15 unemployed graduate students. Twenty-six industrial projects include: two plastic producing plants that are both in operation right now; a wood-cutting project; 14 metal industry projects for producing tools, spare parts, iron rods, trans [sic--transformers ?], hydrolic presses, steam-operated machines, aluminum rods, soldering wires, barrels, samovars, plows, automobile service stations and electric sign makings. These projects are 65 percent completed. In addition, construction work of three brick-making projects, three textile projects consisting of plants for making socks, towels and textiles with elastic and two mining projects--salt and gypsum--are nearing completion and will be ready for operation. Other achievements of the Center for the Expansion of Industrial Services in the province include a plant for making chicken feed; 54 development projects that are 80 percent completed; the building of 6 gasoline stations in the cities of Tabriz, Ardabil and Sarab; an automated bread plant, a synthetic-fiber rug weaving factory and a mechanized brick plant.

In conclusion, he noted that from the above-mentioned fund some 45 million tumans had been spent on projects pertaining to guilds and services; 65 million tumans

on agricultural projects; 6 million tumans on development projects; 6.5 million tumans on restarting various plants and factories and 1.4 million for loans.

Expansion of Light Industries

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 81 p 3

[Text] Deputy minister of the Ministry of Commerce in charge of foreign trade, the managing-director of textile center, a member of the board of directors of the wood and paper production, and a member of the board of directors of the center for production and distribution of metals have announced the method of activity and study of the expansion of the centers for the production and distribution of metals, textiles and paper and wood.

Assadollahzadeh [Deputy Minister of Commerce] first said: "In order to achieve economic independence, we are aiming at preventing the import of such goods which already exist in the country, and as a rule reduce imports. Our second goal is to alter the pattern of consumption in the country. By giving direction to our imports, domestic production will be encouraged, and by providing facilities in connection with raw materials, and by putting restrictions on finished goods, the country's economy will be directed towards self-sufficiency."

He then added: "Regarding importers, priority will go to centers set up by the ministry of commerce. If there is a need for importing, say refrigerators or fans, it will be done by the center and the private sector will be restricted. Second in line are the nationalized companies and consumer coops. In case of shortages in these areas, the private sector will be able to import the goods in short supply. As for the type of goods, foodstuff has the priority as well as medicine and raw material needed by the industry.

These centers will prevent many problems from developing and unnecessary goods will not enter the country.

Assadollahzadeh went on to say: Cooperatives play an important part in the national trade. The goods imported by the government should be put at the disposal of the coops. They will be provided with all sorts of facilities. He also added that the government should prepare and submit to the Islamic Assembly a bill for the nationalization of trade, and ask people for their views on the subject.

He was followed by the managing-director for the Textile Center, Mr Yahya 'Al-e Eshaq. He said: The Textile Center has three responsibilities: execution, control and direction. Execution deals with the purchases that will be carried out according to figures and statistics available. Because the purchases are made by only one center, there is a competition among the sellers, as a result of which prices have decreased 30 percent below normal.

As for control, in the case of goods where we lack expertise and experience, since we are dealing with consumers the needed goods must be imported. The price, quantity, the origin of goods and other conditions, as well as the control and the distribution is our [the center's?] responsibility.

Another responsibility of the centers for procurement and distribution is the control of the prices of all imported goods. There were no controls in the past, and therefore, profiteering and hoarding was prevalent and the country was being dragged towards more dependence on the outside world.

As for direction, the policy is to make the country self-sufficient through foreign commerce and make the imports help our industries. He also added that every day the textile center reviews the records of some 500,000 dollars worth of imported goods. Some 10 million meters of textile goods will be released (by the center) before the end of the current year and the country will not face textile shortages.

In conclusion, he said that 30 percent of goods imported will be put at the disposal of cooperatives and sold at fair prices.

Next to speak was Abolfazl Zandi, member of the board of directors of the wood and paper organization who said: In the setting up of these centers, our short term mission is the control of imports through collection of facts and figures, registration of demands and the control of prices. The efforts are aimed at providing our industries with their needs through coordination of our work and putting an end to the import of goods which are produced in the country as well.

With regard to printing and writing paper, requests for import exceed our actual needs a great deal of which will arrive before the new year [21 Mar 81] and there will be no shortage of either wood or paper this year. He was followed by Mohammed Mehdi Jahanbin, a member of the board of directors of the organization for production and distribution of metals. He said that the center had been able to save some 290 million dollars by its activities.

Other activities of the center included that of reducing prices, preventing the flight of foreign exchange from the country, getting rid of the middlemen, neutralization of the international embargoes and the dissolution of the multi-national corporations.

Jahanbin also said that statistics show that 1,805,250 tons of metal goods had arrived in the country in the first three quarters of the year.

The center determines prices and dealers are bound to observe them.

Refugee Settlement in Yazd

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 81 p 11

[Interview with Ali Saqafi, Yazd governor-general]

[Excerpts] Yazd--KEYHAN Correspondent: In an exclusive interview with the KEYHAN correspondent in Yazd, Ali Saqafi, the Governor-General of the province, spelled out his views regarding agricultural development in Herat and Marvast regions, distribution of lands in the province and the actions taken for the re-settlement of war refugees in Yazd.

In describing the result of his visit to Herat and Marvast regions, which took place, the governor-general told KEYHRAN correspondent:

"These regions that were part of the Kerman Province became part of the Yazd Province some time ago, and because they are far from the capital, they have been neglected and are very backward. Even though Herat has about 15,000 people, with the same number of people living in Marvast, and the two regions have enough water and good agricultural potentials, they did not receive serious attention and remained backward. Even though some 3,000 families live in these two regions, there is not an inch of asphalt road there. In addition, medical facilities and utilities exist on their most elementary levels. People suffer from these shortages and we try to seek remedies with the very limited resources we have at our disposal.

About the work being done now to meet the needs of the people in the area, Governor-general Saqafi said:

Right now we are carrying out an agricultural development project while at the same time we try to isolate various problems. There is plenty of water in the area during a few months of the year. If we could store the water needed for cultivation throughout the year, it would be a big step. Before the construction of the dam is completed, brooks in the area will be isolated. To help solve the health problem in the Herat and Marvast region, an Indian doctor has been dispatched to the area.

About the action taken with regard to the construction of a dam in the region, and a report that it could meet the fate of a similar project in the Abarqu plain, the governor-general said:

In the early days of the revolution, unemployment presented a very serious problem, especially when anti-revolutionaries could have taken advantage of such a weak point. For that reason, our brothers tried to act quickly and do something about it. Some of their actions were effective and had good results. A number of their projects, such as this one (the Abarqu project) did not work and failed. The Abarqu project was an agricultural development project. A number of deep wells were dug but no water was produced. The land was not suitable either, and as a result some 7 million tumans was wasted.

9561

CSO: 4906

STUDENTS ABROAD IN NONTECHNICAL FIELDS TO BE DENIED FUNDS

Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 13 Feb 81 p 23

[Text] Iranian students in Sweden are in danger of expulsion because they are studying the wrong subjects at the universities.

Iranian authorities have decided that the banks of the country are not to furnish money to Iranians that are studying, e.g., pedagogy or sociology. And without money they will get no residence permits.

The new edict from Iran says that one must study certain specified subjects to get money from home. The approved subjects are medicine, technical and scientific subjects, and agriculture.

"This is unjust," says Hossein Matinzadeh, an Iranian student in Stockholm. "We can no longer freely choose what we will study. Moreover, the Iranian authorities want to have strict control over everybody that is studying abroad.

"Many students here get money from their families in Iran. To get the money forwarded by Iranian banks a long list of pieces of information must be turned in."

Hossein Matinzadeh describes how it works:

"The family back home in Iran must buy a special form that costs about 70 Swedish kronor. They then send it to the student here. He must fill in how long he has been a student, what subject he is studying, what subjects he plans to study, and what he will work at later. A lot of other information and certifications are also required."

Hossein Matinzadeh himself has studied in Sweden for 3 years. He has studied industrial economics, pure economics, and ADB [automatic data processing].

"Economics is one of the subjects we shall not be allowed to study," he says. "But I am not hit by the new rules because I have already been a student for so long."

The new regulations apply to students who began studies in the humanities and the social sciences this academic year or are planning such studies.

"Students who have begun their education in forbidden subjects can be forced to break off their studies and go home," says Stefan Lindholm, president of the student body at Umeå. "Umeå is one of the places with a great many Iranian students, and we know right now that the studies of 15 or 20 of them are directly threatened.

"One chance for the students to continue is to switch to one of the permitted educational lines. But that is not so easy, either, in view of the prevailing rules and the possibilities of dispensations, etc. Unfortunately, we in the student body cannot do much more than try to give out information and create opinion."

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CSO: 3109

SUPPORT FOR ALIGNMENT SEEN IN ARAB COMMUNITY

Tel Aviv 'AL HANISHMAR in Hebrew 4 Feb 81 p 8

[Article by Qasim Zayd: "Support of Alignment Increases in Arab Community--
Objection to Arab Parties."]

[Text] Anyone who deals with the outlook of the elections in the Arab community is taking a risk, since there has not been a special poll taken until now to check the mood among the Arab public. But anyone who is familiar with Arab attitudes knows the political map.

There is much support felt in the Arab public of the Alignment along with the hope that the Alignment platform will be responsive to the basic demand of full equality if and when it wins in the elections. The desire to defeat the Likud is strong in the Arab community, which wants the Alignment to win by a substantial margin.

In talks with dozens of people of the entire Arab political spectrum, I found out that there is an objection to the Arab parties, which all these years have been an obstacle and a source of disappointment.

Many have told me: We hope that the leadership of the Alignment will respect the wishes of the Arab citizens and will place several Arab candidates in realistic positions in the general list of the Alignment.

I further found out that the chances of the United Arab List, headed by Member of Knesset Jabar Muadi, are nil, and many told me: We hope that the leaders of that party will respect the wishes of the Arab public and will pull out of the race.

Bedouin and Farmer Party

The heads of bedouin tribes in the Negev and in the north are determined to establish an independent party in order to respect the wishes of Member of Knesset Hamad Abu Rabi'ah, who asked in his will that they preserve the bedouin party.

Our correspondent found out that Shaykh Musa al-Tuma has the best chances to head the party, since this was the wish of Member of Knesset Hamad Abu Rabi'ah before he died.

Informed sourced told me, that even before Hamad Abu Rabi'ah agreed to run for the first time for the Knesset, he advised the heads of the bedouin tribes to offer the leadership of the party to Shaykh Musa al-Tuma. Now, after the tragic death of Member of Knesset Hamad Abu Rabi'ah, there is a widespread tendency to respect his wishes and to appoint Shaykh Musa al-Tuma to head the party.

In Labor Party circles there is a tendency to put Dr Yunis Abu Rabi'ah at the head of the Bedouin List. He is the cousin of Shaykh Hamad Abu Rabi'ah. In the second place will be a leader from one of the Arab villages in the Galilee.

Difficulties in RAKAH

The Arab community is not too anxious to support the HADASH party in the coming elections. Many have told me that supporting RAKAH will not change the political picture and it can only weaken, though indirectly, the Alignment.

The internal situation in RAKAH is not good. Because of Member of Knesset Hana Moise's grave illness, and because of the tendency to replace the head of the national committee of the Arab local councils, there are difficulties in composing the RAKAH list. Two men vie for the place of the representative of the national committee in the HADASH party--Jamal Tarbia, head of the local council of the village of Sahnin, and Muhammad Zaydan, head of the council of the village of Manda and the spokesman of the national committee of the Arab local councils.

Most of the committee members do not support RAKAH. Ibrahim Nimar, mayor of Shefar'am and vice chairman of the national committee, told me: "I am not a member of any party and I am in favor of an independent Arab party. But since such a party is not feasible under present conditions, I support the Alignment and I believe most of the Arab public will too."

This is the outlook of the mood in the Arab community five months before the elections.

9565

CSO: 4805

CHANGE SEEN IN PLO PEACE POLICY

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jan 81 pp 9, 11

[Article by Matityahu Peled: "Dialog with Palestinians"]

[Text] The modern history of contacts with enemies shows that the admission of maintaining contacts with the enemy is sometimes as hard as reaching the decision to maintain such contacts. The contacts themselves usually indicate a willingness to test the possibility of replacing hostile relations with other kinds of relations, while a public admission of such contacts is tantamount to expressing a hope that such change is indeed feasible. In other words, public admission of contacts amounts to stating the fact that there is basis for ending hostility.

The Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, which recently celebrated its fifth anniversary, has tried to shift from the stage of contacts with the PLO to the stage of full confirmation of such contacts. The talks between its representatives and the PLO began in June 1976 on the basis of the statement of the council which was made public in March 1976. This statement called for ending the conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinian people, whereby Israel would recognize the Palestinians' right for self-determination, and would conduct negotiations to this effect with the PLO; the Palestinian leadership, for its part, will recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, and as the fulfillment of the Zionist idea.

On 31 December 1976, it was agreed between me and Dr Isam Sartawi, that the council will publicly announce the existence of the contacts which take place because of the statement of the council (a non-public announcement of the contact was given to the Israeli Government as they began). Indeed, this announcement was publicized the next day, on 1 January 1977. But it was followed immediately by a denial from Beirut, issued by the political section of the PLO. This denial was made possible, for one thing, because Reuter's Newsagency gave an inaccurate report of the announcement; yet the denial was not worded in such a way that it made it clear that only details were inaccurate, but rather that there were no contacts at all.

Little by little statements by PLO leaders were made, designed to set the record straight. But the denial remained engraved in the consciousness of anyone who was interested in the subject. As late as 18 December 1980 Yasir Arafat admitted in an interview published by the prestigious Lebanese weekly AL-HAWADITH that indeed

those contacts took place. He went on to explain that such contacts took place by virtue of the decision of the National Palestinian Council of 1977, and that in light of his position he had to approve them. He added: "Anyone who wishes to join this dialog can do so." When asked whether such contacts were intended to drive a wedge among Israeli statesmen, he answered: "The intention of the contacts is not to drive a wedge among statesmen. Rather they are intended to create new political conditions in the area."

On this basis Dr Sartawi was able to point out in his letter to the convention of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, which was written on 31 December 1980, 4 years after the agreed upon announcement was denied, that these new conditions mean that "earlier than our enemies expect it there will be peace between the Palestinian state and the State of Israel and their peoples." To emphasize the belief that indeed such peace will come sooner than expected by many, the council decided to adopt as its emblem the flags of Israel and Palestine crossing each other.

This time too there were angry reactions against the moves of the PLO leadership and the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. The reactions were expressed by fly-by-night Palestinian organizations. But the official spokesman of the PLO pointed out the great importance of the latest developments, the Jordanian information minister called it an important contribution to the peace process, and Dr Sartawi himself stressed in an announcement published by the Beirut newspaper AL-NAHAR, on 16 January, that his letter is exactly in keeping with the PLO policy as decided by the Palestinian National Council.

There is no doubt that such far-reaching changes in the PLO's open positions deserve more attention than the Israeli public is willing to give them. This is so because of the clear unwillingness in Israel to give the resolution of the conflict on the basis of mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO in the legitimate rights of the Palestinians a chance. But there is no doubt that the significant change in the PLO position is to a great extent the result of the years of talks and contacts between its leadership and a group of Israelis, in which both parties got to know each other better.

The extent of the understanding which exists today on the Palestinian side toward Israel can be seen in the interesting analysis which Dr Sarwati offers in his article on the new political plan of the Labor Party, which was published in the PLO magazine, FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH, in the weekly of the same name, and in the PLO weekly in English, MONDAY MORNING. He rightfully rejects the plan of the Labor Party as unproductive at all for the peace process. But while he protests the definition of the Labor Party issued by the Socialist International in its session in Madrid in November 1980, which sees it as a "force for peace," he goes on to explain that the situation after the 1967 War created three approaches in Zionism for the solution of the Palestinian problem: The approach of the right, which demands annexation of all parts of the Land of Israel and the removal of the Palestinian residents; the Alignment approach, which maintains that the Palestinians cannot be removed, and is willing to give up the densely populated Arab areas without political recognition; and the peace movement, which advocates recognizing the Palestinian people and its right to its own state, under the leadership of the PLO, and withdrawal from all occupied territories. With the latter the PLO can reach an understanding and a settlement.

For the first time it is crystal clear that PLO leaders are now able to distinguish between shades of Zionist ideology and determine their attitude toward the various views which exist within Zionism, on the basis of the principles of the groups and not on the basis of one-dimensional vision, as was the case for many years. Thus, the generalized conception of Zionism, as a theory which cannot coexist with the Palestinian people, is ended, and for the first time the fact is presented to millions of Palestinians that there can be coexistence between a Zionist Jewish state and the Palestinian people, on condition that the Zionist Jewish state will adopt a policy of true peace, will give up its expansionist policy, and will recognize its Palestinian neighbor.

This new view of the PLO has important indications in the international arena. In the last session of the Socialist International, for example, an alternate position to that of the Labor Party, supported by Willy Brandt and Butrus Ghali, was stated. This position which was approved by PLO observers, was presented in Israel as "anti Israeli." But a quick look at it shows that this is totally unfounded. The document which is signed by Austria, Spain, Italy, Senegal, and Sweden, along with a few other countries, expresses the wish for peace "based on the security of Israel and all the other states in the region, and the clear resolution of the Palestinian problem, based on the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

It is significant that the PLO supports such an "anti Israeli" resolution. The important indictment against Israel is that the great change in the PLO remains without a similar reaction from Israel, and that the term "anti Israeli" is applied so irresponsibly to any political statement which strives for a just and lasting peace.

9565

CSO: 4805

RIYADH UNIVERSITY DEVELOPING CAR POWERED BY SOLAR ENERGY

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 11 Jan 81 p 5

[Article by Muhammad al-Qahtani: "Scientific Accomplishment at Riyadh University; Car Fueled by Solar Energy; 4 Months for Blueprinting and Implementation; 4 Persons Participate in Invention; Car Speed Is 50 Kilometers an Hour and Can Travel 50-80 Kilometers if Charged for 10 hours; Dynamo, Battery and Solar Cells Are Car's Entire Contents; Studies to Reduce Recharging to One Hour; Science School Produces Advanced Solar Cells"]

[Text] From time to time, we hear about a scientific event in the western countries. The wire services circulate the news of such an event and often surround it with a halo that is actually much bigger than it merits. Very often, such an event is still in its preliminary stages. But what happens when something which we can call with utter pride a scientific accomplishment occurs here in the kingdom? There is no doubt that--even if such an accomplishment has not yet reached the phase of real success--we are entitled to consider such an event a scientific accomplishment. As to why, it is because we lack some of the fundamentals which the west possesses, such as long experience in this sphere, the environment, the resources and many other things. Yet, and God be thanked, we have worked to secure the resources and to create the atmosphere. We have started, yes we have started. This is why the scientific event taking place within the walls of Riyadh University, specifically within the Engineering College, is truly considered a feat for every Muslim and Arab. Riyadh University is entitled to feel proud of this scientific accomplishment which is embodied in operating a car powered by solar energy and built by the university members. I do not wish to prolong this introduction because I am not good at sensational words that would arouse your interest. So come with me let us take this short trip with Dr Fu'ad Abu-al-Futuh so that he may tell us about this car that doesn't use petroleum and that is powered by solar energy.

Regarding this scientific accomplishment, how its concept was developed and what steps it has passed through, Dr Abu-al-Futuh has said: To start with, we have in the physics section of the Riyadh University School of Sciences a laboratory whose objective is to conduct research on manufacturing and developing solar cells. We thought of conducting somewhat realistic tests on these cells which we produce in the laboratory. What is meant by realism here is to connect these cells to an electric load, meaning an engine, scientifically because we are conducting measurement tests on these cells. Such measurements reflect the characteristics of a

cell, but not 100 percent. This is why we thought of using a small engine with something that we have built and that we have called, for the sake of argument, a car. In fact, it is not a car but a mere combination of various parts. This means testing the cell's ability, if we may use the expression, to turn an engine when this cell is charged. Shortly afterwards, his excellency the university president asked us if we could actually build a prototype car. The university president and the dean of the School of Sciences did actually adopt this project and promised to secure the needed financing. Thus, the simple idea turned into this concept with all its dimensions. All we did was to make our calculations quickly and find out that we could build a bigger prototype. The truth is that there are those who tell us that we are not the first to think of or to build such a car. However, I have my reservations in this regard. These statements are untrue because all the attempts made earlier did not use a real car, meaning that the people involved in those endeavors built prototypes similar to the first one we built--i.e., a small prototype which is not a real car. Perhaps some people have seen on television the prototype built in Brazil. It is not a real car but rather more of a (motorcycle) than a car--mere frames and a steering wheel with a weight of no more than 150 kilograms at the most. But what we have done is done for the first time. We brought a used car with a weight of 650 kilograms, not to mention its load, and made our calculations on the basis of building a realistic prototype. Naturally, we replaced the engine and whatever relies on oil and added parts using electricity generated by solar cells.

The role of the cells is confined to the fact that they absorb sunlight and transform it into electricity. Our task is to make use of this electricity. The cells as such are a modern piece of equipment and a new and expensive idea. This is why the use of solar cells is limited. Our task in the energy laboratory is to either look for modern means or innovate means to curtail the production costs of cells or replace the currently used materials by less costly, more practical and easier to manufacture materials. This was our primary goal. The fact is that the solar car is not a goal in itself because it was tantamount to an endeavor to test the effectiveness of solar cells when used in public life. This goal is actually more important than the car. If we use the cells in pumping water out of wells, especially in the rural and remote areas, and if we can build a solar cell plant to generate power for electric pumps used for this purpose, this would be more beneficial, considering that the use of oil for these purposes is costly and not practical. This was the goal and the prototype "car" that we have is a purely experimental prototype. The first step that we covered was to test the possibility of using solar cells to supply an electric load with the needed power. Naturally, this prototype is not the efficient prototype that we seek. We consider this success a first step or a first phase. There are other planned phases of development. In its present form, the car can be driven and is ready for use. But it doesn't have the efficiency we desire. So we have other phases ahead of us. There is, for example, the phase of using storage batteries with the task of making up for the difference between the energy received from the sun and the energy needed by the engine. There are other phases as well. We are trying to reduce engine consumption, to raise the efficiency of the cells and to raise the productivity of the cells on the basis of focusing sunlight by high percentages to increase cell production. In case this is done, our reliance on assisting batteries will be reduced. It becomes thus obvious that we have ahead of us a program of about 2

years before we can say that this car is an economical prototype. In its present condition, it can only be described as a practical prototype whose objective is to test certain phases because we still use electric circuits [in the present prototype].

Car Specifications

Insofar as the specifications of the present car are concerned, it can travel at a speed of up to 50 kilometers per hour with a single charge requiring a period of about 10 hours of sunlight. The car can travel a distance of 50-80 kilometers. Therefore, additional recharging is required for additional distances. We are interested in reducing the time required for recharging in the future because it is not practical to require 10 hours of recharging to travel such a distance. We are also interested in increasing the car's range to 100 kilometers. This is why I would like to stress again that what has been accomplished is not the goal but just one step in a long trip.

As Idea, Yes It Is Successful

So, you believe that as an idea, this work has been successful?

Yes. The idea, as a scientific idea, has been successful by evidence of the fact that the car can travel normally. But from a certain viewpoint, these cells are considered work connected with our efforts to transform solar cells [sic]. But the car is not the required prototype because it is just an experiment in work and we will try to develop it.

Means of Development Are Available

On the possibility of developing this experiment so that it may be called in invention and become a reality evident to all eyes, Dr Fu'ad Abu-al-Futuh, the man in charge of this work, has said:

The potentials are excellent but implementation depends on the availability of specialized technicians and sufficient time because the four individuals who have carried out this work shoulder many duties and they have been putting in a lot of overtime work. This approach is not good for sound work which requires the presence of people who work fulltime so that they may devote their minds to this particular problem because this work does actually require mental exertion. Had there been fulltime dedication of efforts, the work done would have been accomplished in a much shorter time. The ideas are there, the resources are available and the scientists are present.

Time Consumed by Work

It took us nearly 4 months to make our calculations and to carry out the work after we developed our visualizations. What helped us carry out this work speedily is that we had built at the university a water fountain powered by solar energy. The truth is that the car was not the goal, as I have already pointed out, because it is a project for which the need is not there in the immediate, and even

foreseeable, future. My goal was to build water pumps to supply water to agricultural areas. It is true that the current kinds of cars pose an imminent and unreasonable danger to man, considering that they intensify pollution. Despite this danger which causes the search for an alternative to the car, I still considered this aspect a subsidiary one. The prototype car does not depend on oil in any way.

What Are Contents of Car?

Dr Abu-al-Futuh has said: We bought this car and stripped everything off of it, leaving only the body, the (seats) and the steering wheel. We added to it the kind of dynamo used to raise water to house roofs, but with special specifications, of course. The dynamo was tested carefully to make sure that it gets maximum energy from the engine with minimum electricity consumption. This means that the engine has to meet certain scientific specifications to make it possible to produce more energy with smaller energy consumption. There are storage batteries, solar batteries and there is something that controls these three parts, namely the cells, the batteries and the dynamo. This control is performed by an electric circuit whose task is to regulate the energy, to dispense [electricity] to the engine according to calculations, to take from the cells according to calculations and to nourish the cells when there is drawing [presumably meaning electricity generation] from the engine. I can say that this circuit is very primitive and is not the one we are seeking (and it is one of the fundamental problems) because solar energy is not a stable source.

(The sunlight received by the cell generates a current--and it is important that this current be regular--that is not regular and on which we cannot rely in operating the engine.) This is why it is very important to have a circuit to carry out the balancing function. It is important to supply the dynamo with a stable current, i.e., to have a dynamic balance. In the future, we will rely completely on electric circuits because they are lighter in weight and last longer than batteries. It is better to rely on these circuits. It is better to start with something fundamental and then improve it than to start from scratch and build something 100 percent new because any work has its flaws and shortcomings.

Who Carried Out This Work?

Basically, 5 individuals have carried out this work. However, this doesn't deny the fact that others assisted with their good efforts.

Task of Solar Cells

Regarding the use of solar energy for home purposes, Dr Fu'ad has said that the use of solar energy is divided into two parts: A part for the exploitation of sunlight and each of them has special equipment [sic, presumably part of sentence dropped]. We should know that solar heat is harmful to the solar cell, meaning that the cell operates better in winter than in summer because it functions by collecting the sunlight. There are other means to collect solar heat and light plays no role in the solar heat complexes because the interest here is in the heat coming with the sunrays. This heat is collected and used in heating or cooling, meaning that heating and cooling depend on solar heat. For electrical uses, solar cells are needed.

School of Sciences Produces Solar Cells

In view of the message of the National Sciences and Technology Center which performs two tasks, the first being that of managing and implementing a number of solar energy projects and other projects in the kingdom and the second that of supporting energy research in the universities generally, there is cooperation between the center and the universities. Such cooperation exists between the center and the School of Sciences whose physics section has gotten a 30-month grant from the center and is currently developing a new kind of solar cells which we believe will be more efficient and less expensive than the types used currently.

Economically, I can say that this project or this car has cost nearly 45,000 riyals, keeping in mind that this is not the real cost because the project is a prototype in which we are not as much concerned with costs as with the work. But if this project is to be realized at an economical level, then we must have totally different calculations. The production in such a project will be big and, therefore, the cost will be different.

Car Size Is not Important

Generally, the size of the car is not the important thing. In its present form, the car is suitable for a small family. The size of the car is not important. What is more important is to improve its performance. As I have already pointed out, I am trying to reduce the time needed for recharging to 2 hours instead of 10 hours, for example, because it is unreasonable to be content with traveling a distance of 100 kilometers after a 10-hour recharge. Don't forget also that we are trying to increase the distance that the car can travel with its basic charge. Priority is being given to these things. This prototype is supposed to have been developed by car makers and people involved in the car industry. This is an art or a technology that is not within our sphere of specialization, if we may use the expression.

Future Projects

Regarding future projects, Dr Fu'ad Abu-al-Futuh has said: I will not pay much attention to this kind of projects. Rather, we will try to carry out scientific work of more imposing dimensions. The scientific work we are engaged in at present is that of producing low-cost and high-efficiency solar cells. When we succeed in this sphere, everything will be easy, God willing, because solar cells can function for 50 years without the need for any maintenance or other costs. Compare the cost of energy and of other means on the one hand and, on the other hand, the costs of solar cells which will not require a single cent in 50 years. As for remote areas, the cells are more convenient for solving their problems.

Fulltime Dedication Is Wish

The truth is that we wish we could devote our full time [to this work]. But this wish is faced by an obstacle, namely the academic burdens at the university and the lack of a surplus of faculty members. The university is not opposed to this work. Theoretically, the work is welcome but practically, it is impossible.

With Dean of School of Sciences

After talking with Dr Fu'ad Abu-al-Futuh, I had to get the opinion of Dr 'Abdallah al-Qadahi al-Muhammad, the dean of the School of Sciences at Riyadh University, who has said: We are all proud of this work because it has been accomplished at Riyadh University. The idea was carried out abroad nearly 10 years ago, even though the proportions and the capabilities were different. This is considered just one step and it is our intention to carry out other steps in succession. The fact is that the first step has been tantamount in proportions to a small car similar in size to a toy car which children drive. We are about to get another car different from this prototype. The goal is to learn and to progress toward the better. I believe that the current step is not bad as a first step. We can say that this car is a clear indication that the scientists can do something. This is the best example that when the basic foundation of any work is available, then such work can succeed. This is the role of the School of Sciences and we hope to realize our aspiration.

Very frankly, the resources are available, the people who can carry out such work are present and there are no noteworthy obstacles facing such a work.

After this short conversation, it remains to be noted, dear reader, that Dr Fu'ad Abu-al-Futuh and Dr 'Abdallah al-Qadahi al-Muhammad, the dean of the School of Sciences, have played a major role in this big accomplishment. I hope that I have contributed to giving you an idea about this scientific event which is truly a feat for all.

8494

CSO: 4802

DOWRIES, OTHER MARRIAGE PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 14 Jan 81 p 5

[Article by Khalid Sa'd Hulwani and Hanan Khalil: "On Your Way to Marriage, Think of: Dowries and Housing; Some Fathers Have Raised Dowry of Their Daughters Because They Have Come to Represent Financial Source for Fathers; Disposition Interferes at Times in Selection of Future Partner; Young Woman Says: High Dowries Are Obstacles Which We Have Created and Which We Must Eliminate; What Are Reasons for Young Men's Recoiling From Marriages: High Dowries or Costly Housing?"]

[Text] Dowries are a problem that persists in imposing itself every moment, especially in a society where some classes are eager to deal with the "young woman" as if she was a commodity that can be sold and bought without her having the right to object, even though the Shari'a guarantees her this right.

The problem that follows that of high dowries is the problem of the "extravagance" in preparing the bride's trousseau and home, in the banquets to which crowds of guests are invited and, before all of this, in the candy box distributed [to guests] at the time of engagement--and it has been said that some of these boxes cost 1,000 riyals each!!

The third problem is that of some young women, said to be educated, who defend the high dowries staunchly so that the young man may be aware of their worth and may not consider them cheap and abandon them at the first sign of trouble! This is a faulty concept because a high dowry has never been the reason for the "survival of a marriage." How many an extravagant marriage has failed after the first night and how many a modest marriage (in terms of dowry, wedding ceremony and home) has flourished in love, appreciation and happiness!

This report, which has taken the form of a poll seeking the views of young men and women and of parents, revolves around all these points.

With Early Marriage

At the outset, we interviewed 'Abdallah Muhammad al-Qahtani, from the School of Sciences, who has expressed support for early marriage, provided that the opinion of the individual concerned and his unequivocal approval of the marriage be taken

and that the young man have full faith in the intended wife in all cases. Regarding the obstacles that may face a marriage, al-Qahtani said: There have been no obstacles or problems in my way as a result of understanding.

Marriage Burdens

Yes, there are pre-marriage and post-marriage burdens. The pre-marriage burdens are the costs and the consideration that there will be a transformation from one phase to another. The subsequent burdens are (those of living close to another person) and shouldering the responsibility of this person. Moreover, the conditions of marital life are different from those of single life. Regarding the problem of dowries, al-Qahtani has said: What I know is that if there is complete understanding, a strong bond and approval by both sides, then the costs in this case depend on the husband himself. If his financial situation permits him, then he will rival [others in spending] for fear of what people may say. If he is in a middle financial position, then he will also force himself to spend beyond what he can afford in order to please people or to show off and pretend to be in a position above his own. I call this unnecessary costs and excess. I believe that there is no need for such excesses as long as there is understanding. The solution to the problem of high dowries is to establish an average (figure) between the two rich and poor classes. This (figure) will motivate the poor to attain the higher and the desired position and to exert greater efforts to reach it. Even though the poor will be the ones relatively hurt by this (figure), yet the figure will motivate them to exert greater efforts.

I believe that the bridegroom should pay the bride what is her due, namely a dowry not exceeding 20,000 riyals. The wedding costs should not exceed 20,000 more riyals. The total costs will thus amount to 40,000 riyals. I believe that these figures are not hard for someone who wants to marry and wants a partner for life when he finds the right partner. However, the figures may be hard for someone who says he will marry as other people do and who doesn't understand the duties he shoulders and the rights to which he is entitled.

Wife's Qualities

Insofar as the educated husband is concerned, the wife should have these qualities: She should be of his financial level, i.e., there should be financial proximity and neither side should be hurt by either an excessive dowry or a diminished dowry. Second, there should be compatibility in education so that she may be educated to the degree where she can act independently (and live with her husband) within the limits of the education that has enabled her to gain full awareness. In this regard, it is better if the wife has a degree equal to or lower than that of her husband, as long as understanding exists.

Dowries and Housing

Currently, I believe that the reason for the unwillingness of young men to marry is the high dowries. But this obstacle can be overcome if there is ideal understanding between the bride [presumably meaning the bridegroom] and the bride's family. I believe that such an understanding can wipe out high dowries because a diminished

or reduced dowry doesn't mean a slighting or an undermining of the reputation of a bride seeking to form a good and harmonious family. I consider an ideal marital life at a lower dowry much better than a miserable marital life that may have cost a very high dowry.

I don't demand that the bride be from a well-known family. In other words, the wife should be of the same financial and social level. The problem of family lineage should not arise if what is intended of marriage is to live and exchange responsibilities and to build a new entity in a society which considers understanding a firm and strong mainstay that supports and enhances this society.

I believe that social differences are false characteristics or are like thin veneers which must dissolve with the march of time because, very frankly, there is no justification for their presence because their damage is greater than their benefit and because they divide society into classes. One of the ailments of our age is the so-called family disintegration in the one society.

I believe that the phenomenon of marriage to foreign women is not new and does not reflect the lack of desire to marry Saudi women. Therefore, it should not worry us, especially since it has been present for some time.

Insofar as high dowries are concerned, my advice to young men and to fathers is that whenever a father finds a young man with the proper education and ethics, he should not let go of such a young man regardless of what dowry the young man offers, unless the father's aim behind marrying his daughter is to boast of the dowry.

Dowry Is no Solution

I believe that limiting the dowry value is a good idea. But what I know better is that few people will observe such a limit and that many will not, even if conditions are set. An undesirable husband is not a good husband even if he pays all the treasures of the world and the worth of an ideal husband is not diminished but is rather enhanced even if he pays a small dowry.

I believe that moderate and adequate dowries for both sides are within the range of 40,000 riyals, all costs included.

With Streamlined Costs

I prefer that the wedding ceremonies be at the proper level, without leading to excesses and to extraordinary costs and expenses. With consideration, such extra and excessive costs and spending could be used for beneficial purposes and to obstruct many harmful things.

Dowry Within Limits of 80,000

We have interviewed a father to learn his view regarding the marriage age for his daughter and he has said that it is his opinion that the age of 15 is the marriage age. He has also said that he prefers a rich husband for his daughter, that

degrees are of no importance because money can make up for degrees and everything else, except lineage, meaning that the bridegroom should be from a well-known family. If you ask me why I prefer him to be rich, then I will say with utter frankness that I want to secure my daughter's life after my death. What assures me that my daughter will live a happy life if I marry her to a poor person who may torture her? I would also like you to know that I also demand a high post-marriage dowry [mu'akkhar sidaq] so that the husband may not be able to divorce my daughter if he feels like it because he will find himself compelled to pay a large sum. This is something that a poor man cannot do. As to the dowry he is demanding in case a suitor asks for his daughter's hand in marriage, this father said:

I cannot set the sum exactly. But when I sit down with the suitor and give him my approval, we will make an account of what we need and of what he has to pay. If you want exact details, then I will tell you what happened when my eldest daughter got married. I asked the bridegroom for 100,000 riyals but he said that this sum was too large. So I lowered the figure to 80,000 riyals only in order to help him and he agreed to this sum and to the manner in which the dowry was to be spent. This father further said: You know that wedding costs are heavy and require a lot of money. This is what makes me ask for a large sum. As to how the sum is distributed, then I will tell you with utter frankness that a part of the dowry is divided among some family members, especially the bride's mother. With the remaining part, we make the preparations for the wedding party and buy some things that the bride needs.

Large Dowry First

Don't you think that the dowry belongs to the bride who should dispose of it as she wishes, as the teachings of the Koran instruct?

I do not doubt this. However, what we are doing is a custom that is followed by everybody and that cannot be changed. However, we give the bride what she wants and prepare for her most of what she needs with a part of the dowry.

Don't you think that the sum you demand of the young man is so large that he may not be able to pay it or may be forced to borrow to pay it and that this may cause him hardship in the future?

I will tell you frankly that any young man who cannot pay the dowry must wait until he is able to gather the needed sum. It is unreasonable for such a man to marry when he possesses nothing because he will not be able to shoulder the responsibility. It is true that in our days, we the older generation, we got married with a small dowry but our days were different from your days. Moreover, I believe that no young man will seek to get engaged to be married if he does not have an adequate dowry, especially since he knows that the dowry asked of him will be large.

So you don't believe that there is a problem of high dowries in our society?

No, it isn't true that there is a problem of high dowries. The problem that actually exists is that of the lack of housing. If housing is found, I believe

that all will get married and that the young man will be able to pay the dowry asked of him because it is not large [sic].

Naturally, there has to be a big wedding party so that a man may be able to invite anyone he wants to this party because if you don't invite all your acquaintances, they get upset and demand another party.

From 18 to 20 Years

Here is an opinion by another type of father who has answered the question regarding the right marriage age for a woman by saying that it is from 18 to 20 years because the young woman will have by then realized the meaning of marital life and responsibilities. As to what he prefers in a son-in-law, this father has said that he prefers that the man be educated and that he possess reasonable financial means, i.e., a man who combines good qualities, whether in terms of lineage or of social situation. First of all, I must consider the type of individual who will make my daughter happy and not miserable. If I marry my daughter to a person who is only educated, he may not be able to provide her with all of life's needs, especially if she has a lower educational standard than his. If I marry her to a person who is only rich, then he may bring her unhappiness and misery because I may be far from her and may not be aware of her problems. Thus, I find myself responsible before God to secure for my daughter a happy life with a competent person who secures her comfort and happiness. Here, I would like to underline something important, namely that every father wants his daughter to be married to a sensible and religious man with a degree of education and capable of shouldering the marriage responsibilities.

Against High Dowries

Do you have a certain precondition insofar as the dowry is concerned or are you content with a certain token sum?

I am against high dowries. Why should we demand astronomical sums from young men--sums that could cause problems and unhappiness in the future and may cause our daughters misery as a result of the debts that the bridegroom has to shoulder and that he may not be able to repay? Such dowries delay the marriage age of young men and this is a danger against which our venerable Prophet has warned. Permit me to ask every father who demands a large sum: Why do you demand such a sum? Will you take some of it [for your personal use] or will you give it to the bride? And why should you take some of it when the Prophet has proscribed such practice? Moreover, will this sum that you demand of the young man bring your daughters happiness or the opposite? I don't believe that it will bring them happiness and I think that you are wrong. I appeal to you, fathers, to reduce the dowry so that every young man may be able to marry because marriage safeguards the youth and this is what our orthodox religion wants. But to offer and sell your daughters like a commodity, then this is proscribed. There is no doubt that every young man wishes to marry quickly and that every young woman wishes to have a married life. Why shouldn't we help them by reducing the dowry and by cutting down on the false pretenses that emerge in weddings usually?

Do you think that there is a problem other than that of dowries obstructing the marriage of young men?

No.

Our Society Imposed High Dowries

The third type of father has stressed that there are high dowries but that they are not so common as to be felt by everybody and that they are rather rare, according to this father's opinion. If we acknowledge the presence of this problem [of high dowries], then our society is the party that has imposed such sums. Moreover, the living requirements are what have made us, the fathers, demand a large dowry from the young suitor seeking marriage. On my part, when a young man comes seeking to marry my daughter, then I don't think that the dowry I will demand will be high.

Don't you think that demanding a high dowry from your son-in-law may cause your daughter family problems in the future?

I don't think so because when the man seeks the marriage and agrees to my terms, then he will feel no special annoyance because he has acted upon his free will.

Let us assume that you have a son who wants to get married and that you are asked to pay a high dowry, will you agree to do so?

Naturally, I will be compelled to succumb, even though this will be done at the expense of my other sons. But I am supposed to do this and he who is compelled will face the hardships, as the proverb says. As for giving [extravagant] parties, I do not at all support such activity. I will be content with a moderate party to which I invite all my acquaintances because people's tongues will have no mercy for me if the party is a simple family affair.

We Created Problem

We have selected some young women to find out their views on high dowries. Because of the embarrassment that divulging their names would cause, we will be content to use letters of the alphabet instead of their names.

At the outset, Miss (A) said: Early marriage is a problem for the young women and also for the young man who begins his practical life without possessing that which enables him to face this life on his own. The issue of high dowries is not a problem, contrary to what is commonly believed. In my view, high dowries are not a problem because we have created these dowries and we can eliminate them with determination, resolution, serious efforts and the real desire to be married. But if the desire is not there and if we throw all the blame on the shoulders of high dowries, then this is a big mistake which our young Saudi men make. I wish that these men would erase this idea from their minds. I do not believe that there is a young man who cannot marry because he doesn't possess the money for the dowry, regardless of its value. This is a rare case that happens when the father demands a very high dowry for his daughter. I believe that such a father is not a father who has his daughter's interest at heart but rather a father who wants to destroy his daughter's life.

But if you want to know the obstacles that stand in the face of marriage, it is my opinion that housing, and only housing, is the problem. The high cost of housing is what makes young men recoil from marriage. There is no other reason. As for your saying that the father may pose an obstacle in the face of his daughter's marriage, especially if he is an educated father, I don't think so because every father seeks to make his daughter happy and money is not everything in life.

As for your request that I set a figure for the dowry value, I believe that this is impossible and that the figure depends on the class differences, meaning the different financial situation from one class to another. But the real criterion for a successful marriage is that the young man furnish his house with whatever it needs and then proceed to seek to marry the woman he wants. He will then find that he will only have to pay the costs of the wedding which may not amount to no more than 50,000 [riyals]. As to the argument that the high dowries have caused Saudi men to marry foreign women, this is not the real reason for such marriages. The reason is that the Saudi man has not become acquainted with the Saudi women and their potential. Moreover, the Saudi man doesn't permit his wife to work and believes that her job is to manage the house, even though there are numerous spheres in which women can serve. But the Saudi young man refuses to see his wife or sister work. I don't know why and I wish I could find the answer. It is true that our customs do not permit us to work. But these customs don't exclude all kinds of work. There are certain kinds of work in which Islam allows us to engage but in which we do not engage. So why do you [men] refuse to let women work even though you marry foreign women who have worked in numerous spheres and who have participated with men in their work? Why the refusal and why don't you want your women to be of a higher educational level than you are? I pose these questions to the young men in the hope that I will find the answer.

As I have already said, housing is the basic problem. So I will say here that if there is understanding between me, my husband and his family and between him, me and my family, then it is all the same to me if I live in his family's house or in my family's house until a solution is found. I also firmly believe that taking the young woman's opinion regarding her future partner is the most important thing because she, and not anybody else, will live with him. Therefore, it is essential that her opinion be taken regarding her future partner so that she may live with him happily.

Not Early Marriage

Miss (B) has said that she doesn't favor women's marriage at an early age because when the woman marries at an early age, she is not qualified to shoulder the big responsibilities of marriage. Moreover, she will not be able to acquire a high degree education that enables her to develop greater awareness and maturity and to understand more profoundly all the responsibilities and requirements of marriage and of life generally. On top of this, when a woman marries at an early age, she wastes many years of her life which, if devoted to acquiring a higher education and experience in life and its responsibilities, would save her numerous hardships and problems with which marriage faces her--hardships and problems which her youth does not enable her to face and surmount.

Regarding the conditions she demands of the future bridegroom, Miss (B) has said: The issue is not one of conditions. Marriage is not a commercial commodity that has to meet inflexible specifications. Marriage or, to put it more precisely, the future partner should fit within a specific equation and should have reasonable and logical qualities that lead to the happiness for which each young woman aspires. The qualities of the future partner depend on the personality of the young woman concerned and there are no certain specifications on which all young women agree. Education, of course, plays the most important role in determining the essential qualities of the husband. The qualities that a young woman with a lower than average education demands in a young man are different from those demanded by an educated woman or a woman with higher education. On the other hand, the personal disposition of the young woman plays a part in determining the qualities of the future husband. If the woman has a simple introvert personality, in addition to the qualitative and quantitative intellectual and educational condition of the young woman--to put it more precisely, when the young woman has a considerable degree of education, then she demands the same, if not a higher, level of education in the young man who courts her. The opposite is also true. Some young women who have a simple personality and who have not yet become aware of the importance of a person's education are not concerned with such qualities in the person to whom they will be bound despite the importance of education in understanding the meaning of life well and in facing its numerous responsibilities--excluding some exceptions among the educated. Such exceptions do not exploit the opportunities that higher education makes available to them to develop a balanced personality adapted to the societies in which they live and with which they are in contact.

As for the qualities I want in the future husband, they do not diverge much from these views, considering that my primary concern is the man's education and culture--and I do not mean a limited culture but that the man should be aware of most of life's affairs and of how to deal with life's requirements. Moreover, he should be able to deal with life properly and with reason, understanding and awareness. He should also be maturely aware of life's extensive demands. To me, these are the most important qualities. This is in addition to the other good qualities that any young woman wishes in her future husband.

What is the solution to make the young men marry their country's women?

The solution to make young men marry women from their country, especially in a society such as the Saudi society in particular and the Arab society generally, is to set the dowry at a certain sum which the young man can afford. This is not at all a simple point and it requires complete social awareness in order to change the concepts prevalent among families, especially among brides' parents. There is no doubt that the material life of most families here has reached a high standard that motivates families to demand of young men courting their daughters a high dowry compatible with the family's material and social position. But this doesn't mean that all the families in a high financial position don't experience the problem of high dowries. Another reason for the problem of high dowries is women's work, considering that a working woman has become a source of income for both herself and her family. This has motivated fathers to demand a high dowry. I would also like to draw attention to the fact that the young woman herself is at times a

party in demanding a high dowry from the man courting her. I believe that this approach is completely unsound and unhealthy. Another aspect is the Saudi young man's hesitation and apprehension of embarking on the experience of marrying a woman who is equally educated or a little less educated than he is. This apprehension is the result of faulty concepts concerning marriage to women university graduates--concepts woven by certain social views either out of pure imagination or as a result of the experience of certain marriages. This is not the rule and we must nullify these futile concepts. This is an important role because the personality of the educated woman must become clear to the young man through purposeful and well-studied awareness.

In her answer to the question on the chances of the success of a marriage to a foreign woman, Miss (C) said:

No generalization can be made on the chances of the success or failure of marriages to foreign women. Such a marriage may succeed if provided with the means and with understanding. But the same cannot be said for all such marriages. She has also said that it is certain that only the wife is entitled to a dowry. As to how the dowry is to be used, she said that it is for the purpose of what the bridegroom needs before the wedding in preparation for the wedding ceremony.

With Limitation of Dowries

Miss (C) has also said: I support the idea of limiting dowries because it is a sensible idea in the face of this high inflation of dowries. I wish that the wise government would set the dowry to a certain sum that takes into consideration the circumstances of each of society's classes. The government will thus guarantee that most young men will marry quickly. I believe that the person most flexible insofar as the issue of dowries is concerned is the young woman herself, even though her opinion doesn't count with her parents, because she appreciates the circumstances of a young man who is beginning his practical life. However, the young woman's opinion is not sought and I wish it would be taken on everything, including the dowry. A father who demands a high dowry for his daughter is a father who wants to use his daughter as a business and not one who wants to get her married. I wish such fathers would appreciate the circumstances of the young men who come courting their daughters.

God's prophet, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, has proscribed extravagance and lavish and extravagant wedding ceremonies. So why this extravagance and waste when a small family ceremony would be enough. We find that a big ceremony results in many things, the most significant of which is a big loss for the husband who is forced to borrow. So why should I or the parent compel him to borrow when such action may affect the daughter's life with the husband? This is what every father and every young woman should be aware of.

No to Early Marriage

Mrs (D), a married woman, has said that she doesn't favor the idea of early marriage because when a woman gets married at an early age, she is not aware of the concepts of life. This provides the opportunity for constant disagreement

with the husband because of the woman's lack of understanding of married life. This is why I prefer that the woman marry when she is mature.

As for the conditions she demands of any young man who may want to marry her daughter in the future, Mrs (D) has said:

1. He should be mature, sensible and educated.
2. He should respect and appreciate the wife.
3. Should be able to provide all that a home needs.
4. Understanding is the most important thing in a marriage.

She has also said that the most important thing in an excellent husband is that he be of a high social level and, then, of high educational level because there are many educated young men who don't know how to talk or deal with others, and yet they are called educated. As for the sociable young man, his sociability, his ability to deal with others and to show understanding may be the result of experience with life and of contact with others which enable him to reach understanding with his wife.

I do not say that the high dowries are the reason for young men's lack of desire to get married. There may be another reason, namely that they have not met the right women. If the young man were able to get together with his future wife and to see her, then marital problems would decrease.

Regarding the demand that dowries be limited, she has said: The reason is the young man and not the dowry. If the bride's family asks for all the money in the world, then the young man would pay the dowry as if it were "a single riyal" if he is convinced and approves of the girl.

She has also said that housing is not a problem. If the wife is comfortable with her husband and his family, then I prefer that she live in his family's house, as long as they respect and love her. As for living with her family, the husband's family may object to this. Why should she live with her family when she has just left it? There is a solution to the housing problem: The wife can either live with the husband's family as a solution to this problem or she can live with the husband in a modest home compatible with their income.

Mrs (D) has also said: The dowry belongs to the bridegroom and not to her family and she may use it to buy gold and to help in furnishing the house.

High Dowries A Problem

Finally, we have concluded from this poll several things which we will sum up in the following:

High dowries are a current problem from which some young men, and not others, suffer.

There are problems other than the problem of high dowries that cause young men to recoil from marriage, such as not permitting the young man to see the prospective bride.

The desire of all young men to get married but the financial inability of some to do so.

Despite the role played by our wise government to encourage young men to get married, some young men still recoil from marriage and some fathers are still intransigent.

The media (radio, television and the press) have a role in limiting dowries and in advising and guiding parents, young men and young women and in bringing their views closer to each other.

8494

CSO: 4802

SAUDI PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRY ASSESSED

[Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 13 Feb 81 p 2]

[Text]

BAHRAIN, Thurs. — The world petrochemical industry must adjust to avoid market disruption when Saudi Arabia's huge new chemical plants start production later in the decade, according to Saudi Industry Minister.

Ghazi Al-Qussaiby told Reuters that Saudi Arabia would eventually produce five per cent of world petrochemicals when all \$10 billion worth of new plants operate in the late 1980s.

He said Saudi Arabia's chemicals would arrive gradually on world markets over seven or eight years and would not disrupt them if existing companies in the United States, Europe and Japan made a "gradual, not painful" adjustment.

But the Minister added: "If the established industry centres ignore what has taken place in Saudi Arabia and continue to plan without taking it into account

then, of course, there might be a surplus."

THIRD WORLD

Dr. Qussaiby, who was visiting Bahrain, also advised Third World countries not to build ambitious petrochemical complexes unless they had both money and cheap energy supplies.

"These industries are energy-intensive and capital-intensive and for any country which has neither energy nor capital to undertake these projects is really wasteful and disruptive", he said.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude oil exporter, has both huge surplus oil revenues and big reserves of natural gas, the basic raw material of the petrochemical industry.

Under a huge industrial development programme the kingdom intends to make use of its gas, which is produced with crude oil and at present flared off and wasted.

NO BASIC DIFFERENCE SEEN BETWEEN BEGIN, PERES

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 28 Jan 81 p 8

["Behind the News" Series by Jibran Kuriyah: "Begin, Peres, and Those Who Dream of Israeli Moderation"]

[Text] It is almost certain that Shimon Peres, currently the leader of the Israeli opposition, will head the new Israeli government which will follow the Begin government--if nothing unexpected takes place now.

Public opinion polls conducted in Israel a short while ago indicate that the Labor Party will win a large majority, enabling it to form a government which will have a large majority in the Knesset.

The polls also indicate that the policy of Begin's government has lost its public support. This shift in Israel, from supporting Begin to supporting the Labor Party and Peres, has its basis and foundation in Israel's extremely poor domestic circumstances, which led a noted American author, J. Harsh, to devote a leading article in several American newspapers, including the "Baltimorean," to a discussion of Israel's severe economic crises.

Simultaneous with the crystallization of major discontent in Israel over monetary inflation, which has reached the highest rate in the world, as well as the declining standard of living, rising prices, and the loss of social security, there has been a shift within Israel from support for Begin to support for Peres. This shift coincides almost exactly with American ideas about the latest stage in the efforts to achieve the second part of the Camp David agreements, the part about the Palestinian cause--the part which Begin and al-Sadat were unable to find a suitable way of achieving.

These ideas did not come into existence with Ronald Reagan's victory in the American presidential elections, but preceded it considerably, and are linked with the possibility, discussed in Washington, of overcoming the impasse reached by the Camp David agreements. During the final days of Carter's administration, the most widely circulated possibility was that Begin would depart and a "moderate" Israeli government, headed by Shimon Peres, would come in, which would "retreat" somewhat from the hard line stands which Begin had been so inflexible on, making room for new freedom of action on the part of the United States on the Arab scene under the pretext of seizing the opportunity of "moderation" in the Israeli stand. Another part of this possibility, which the Israeli papers discussed, was the possibility that al-Sadat, who had lost all influence on the Arab scene and who had become more isolated and weaker within Egypt, would also be replaced.

Apparently, the American desire to see Peres as Israeli prime minister, and as a moderate negotiator in the latest stage of American Middle East efforts, did not come to an end with Carter's departure and Reagan's advent, but acquired even greater vitality because of Reagan's personal disassociation from the Camp David agreements.

At present, Peres is being "polished up" on the Arab and international scene in preparation for his new role. The remarks made by some Arab political figures in some newspapers, with reference to a change in United States policy and the possibility that the United States will begin pressuring Israel in the interest of a "moderate" solution, come within this context.

But how much does Peres' stand differ from Begin's?

If we disregard the details where Peres might differ from Begin, their personal and verbal abilities, or their readiness or unreadiness to maneuver with the United States, then Peres' recent statements, including those he made in some Western European capitals, do not indicate any difference between the two in their stands on the basic issues of the Middle East crisis.

Both Begin and Peres reject (1) withdrawal from the territory Israel occupied in the 1967 aggression; (2) recognition of the national rights of the Arab Palestinian people; (3) the idea of a Palestinian state; and (4) acceptance of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people.

Both adhere to (1) Israel's Judaization of the occupied Arab territories and its alteration of their geographic and demographic character; (2) continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank, with the banks of the Jordan being considered Israel's secure borders; and (3) rejection of the UN Middle East resolutions.

Where is the so-called moderation which some people hope will be a stairway leading to sitting down with the United States at the capitulatory negotiating table?

Those who are waiting for a change in United States and Israeli stands through exhortation, kind words and an appeal to moral and legal values will wait for a long time, and their great hopes will be frustrated.

8559

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DEPUTY PREMIER DISCUSSES AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS, OBJECTIVES, SOLUTIONS

Damascus AL-BATH in Arabic 2 Feb 81 pp 1, 11

[Article by Deputy Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah: "What Do We Want From Agriculture?"]

[Text] It must be acknowledged that the question of agriculture is a most complicated issue, not only in our country but in most Asian countries, because historically its status has always been particularly dependent on the type of land ownership and the means of production, and the societal infrastructure which is either related to or results from these two factors. Therefore, this question is usually avoided, sidestepped, passed over or dealt with in stages without radically confronting it. The agricultural aspects of our five-year economic and social plans have perhaps been influenced by these issues, and the plans may also have fallen down because of them.

What Do We Want From Agriculture?

In short, we say that we want to guarantee basic foodstuffs for our people and materials necessary for agricultural industries, reduce the importation of such goods as much as possible, lower their prices, and ensure a surplus for export-- i.e. to achieve food security and stable agricultural production.

The fact is that so far we have been unable to achieve these goals; in fact, we may even have moved away from them in part. Imported foodstuffs continue to amount to about one-quarter the value of our entire yearly agricultural production, and we are still importing about 1.5 billion Syrian pounds worth of foodstuffs each year. This is a huge shortfall which indubitably has to be dealt with promptly.

But the problem is becoming increasingly aggravated, and will become a huge burden on us if we don't face up to it. It is not very hard to face up to it, for we have vast agricultural potentials which would enable us to achieve the goals I mentioned above if only we put agriculture at the head of our list of priorities and concerns.

Here a question comes to mind: what basic problems face us in the field of agriculture?

If we look at the agricultural question, we see clearly that there is no comprehensive plan to deal with the issue. By comprehensive plan I mean a study of the ownership situation, the means and methods of production, irrigation, manpower, prices, industrialization, ensuring machinery and seeds, financing, investment, increasing animal production, and so forth.

Only one-quarter of the country's arable land is being utilized, which means that we could quadruple the utilized area if the necessary conditions were provided--especially the allocation of financial investments and the implementation of land reclamation in some areas, in addition to other measures which are not very difficult.

The ownership of agricultural land in our country is a stumbling block, for three-quarters of the farms cover no more than 10 hectares each, with the average size of the Syrian farm being 3.5 hectares. This obstacle makes it very difficult to mechanize or plan agriculture, implement and supervise large agricultural projects, and so forth. In fact, it makes it impossible to achieve agricultural intensification or to make huge allocations for investment in agriculture, because the state's role cannot be very effective with such a dispersal of ownership. If the dispersal were accompanied by the establishment of cooperatives, the matter would become less important and we would be able to overcome the problem. However, to date there are only six agricultural production cooperative societies in our entire country. Thus small ownership is perpetuated, and individual means of production prevail.

Another question facing us is irrigation. There are relatively few irrigation sources in our country, and little more than 500,000 hectares are irrigated. Furthermore, irrigation is still done by traditional methods, which lead to water wastage, increased salinity, and occasional flooding. Only one quarter of one percent of our irrigated land is irrigated by modern methods of irrigation (sprinklers for example).

The quantity and type of our agricultural machinery bears no relation to the amount of cultivated land, nor to our actual need for such equipment, especially since in recent years the labor force has turned away from agricultural labor. This has led to a huge increase in wages for agricultural manpower, an increase in production costs, and occasionally to increased wastage during the harvesting of crops. In addition, the marketing system is very poor, and is largely dominated by wholesale dealers. So far, no definite decision has been made with respect to marketing by public sector companies on behalf of the producer and consumer and at the expense of the wholesale dealer.

A solution to the agricultural problem requires the utilization of all arable land, since the area of cultivated land can be quadrupled. At the same time, construction of buildings on farm land should be absolutely prohibited, pollution should be fought, and rural economic activity should be diversified to cover all aspects of food and plant production, animal and fish resources, timber, and so forth. Furthermore, rural agricultural industries should be expanded, and an effective role should be given to the General Farmers' Union. More production cooperative societies should be established, and investments in the public agricultural sector should be more than the sums provided for in the fourth five-year plan. Agriculture should be intensified, problems with reclamation and the use of reclaimed land should be

intensified, problems with reclamation and the use of reclaimed land should be solved, and an investment law should be developed and universally applied. The seventh party congress affirmed these points, the government mentioned them in its statement, the fifth five-year plan bill considered them, and they are now being carried out.

No one should belittle the difficulties of the agricultural question, but in any case they are not insoluble.

8559

CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

MEDICINE PRICES REDUCED--As of today, the new prices for medicine, infant formula and baby food will take effect, in implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Supreme Health Council to solve the country's medicine problem. The new measures will guarantee the availability of necessary medicines, prevent their being smuggled, ensure that the citizens can obtain them at lower prices and better specifications, and eliminate the shortfall on the country's medicine market. The new measures include a 30 percent price reduction for all types of infant formula and baby food, and a 30 percent price reduction for all medicines which have no cheap substitute and which cost more than 10 Syrian pounds. The new regulations provide that all medicines be priced according to their actual cost; accordingly, the prices for 600 new medical preparations will be reduced 30 percent, in addition to all types of infant formula and baby food. Furthermore, more than half the medical preparations available on the market will now cost less than 10 pounds. [Text] [Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 2 Feb 81 p 1] 8559

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